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New Belgrade urban fortunes:

Ideology and practice under the patronage of state and market

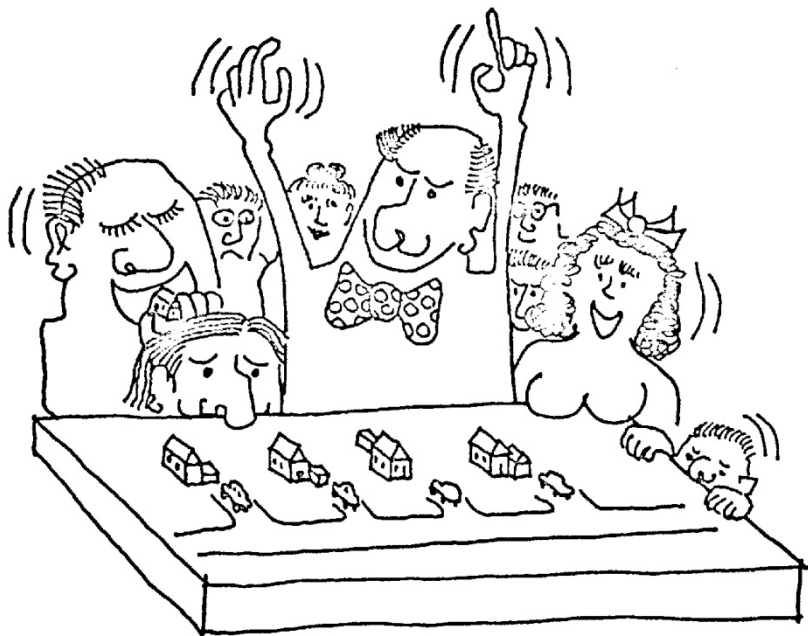


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***"Town planning is a mixture of ideology and practice
under the patronage of state and market."***

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Chapter 1: Introduction

General introduction

Located at the crossroads between the East and the West, caught in a place through which the various political, ethical and cultural currents of our continent flow, Belgrade is among the oldest and most frequently destroyed towns in Europe. Razed more than 40 times, its cultural, artistic and architectural heritage has been endlessly ripped apart and refashioned. All the major events in European history have unfolded at this very place. Several dozen consecutive Belgrades, after blazes and fires and being razed to the ground, have risen up in the same or almost the same place. The town has always been situated at the confluence of two rivers, the Sava and the Danube. Given the fact that those two rivers have names of different genders (in Serbian, the Danube is masculine and the Sava is feminine) the usual metaphor says that "Belgrade was born in the embrace of two rivers", which represents an ancient understanding of the urban genesis of Belgrade.

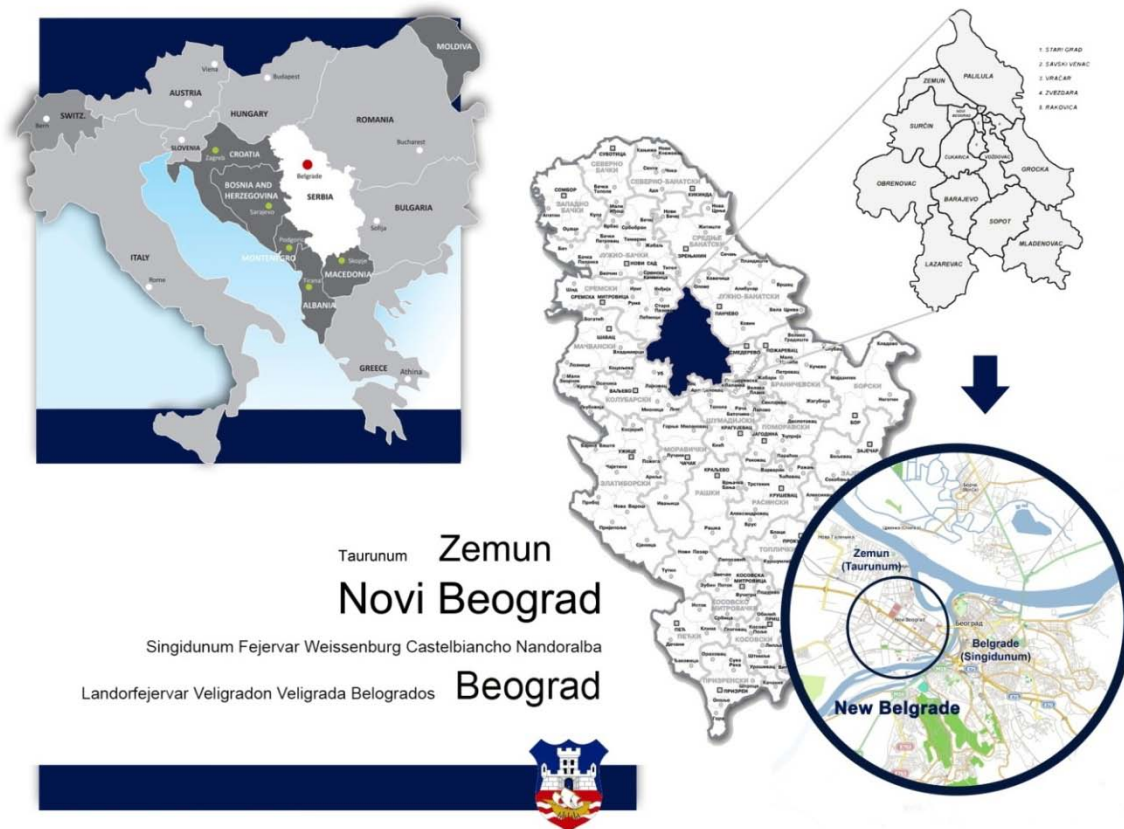


Fig. 1.1: Geographical position (source: personal illustration)

Geographical location of Belgrade is unique in Europe. It has been built at the borderline of two large geographical areas: the bottom and perimeter of Pannonia lowlands, and the north outlines of the mountainous Balkan Peninsula. The location of Belgrade, however, has not always had the same significance in various historical periods. A very favorable geographical position and natural conditions attracted peoples to found a settlement on the reef above the confluence of the Danube and the Sava rivers, the existence of which can be followed from the Neolithic down to the present days.

Belgrade from the Roman period had important significance, as one of the settlements with a highest rank was one of the in the past century it was the leading city of former Yugoslavia and an important multinational and multifunctional metropolis. Nowadays, being the capital of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade is the largest industrial, trade, tourist, cultural, educational, health, sports and political centre. Belgrade is located on the tangent line of Middle Europe and the Balkans, actually half-way between West and Southeast Europe, wherefrom the city has had a lot of benefits, but it has also been struck by a great deal of calamities due to such a location.

During the past it has been the site of wars, conquests and rapidly changing fortunes for much of its thousands-years long history. Belgrade suffered heavy destruction under both World Wars, and it has the unfortunate distinction of being the only European capital to be bombed at the end of the 20th century. Its modern history is marked by abrupt shifts in political status: from a capital of a relatively small nation-state, to a center of a larger and prosperous multi-national federation, to a capital of a nation-state once again. Comparing to period before 1991, Belgrade lost a part of its significance in the European context, primarily because of modified political criteria.

If we push out the fact of the physical destruction and devastation Belgrade has a tendency of growth and development according to certain principles. In the center of this process is a man with his rational, emotional and creative nature. Continuity is a crucial determining factor in the understanding of the evolution of every settlement. Familiarity with the past defines the limits of comparison and measures for the future.

The long and complex history of Belgrade and its urban development cannot be explained by one study. With this in mind this paper focuses on changes in urban environment of New Belgrade since it was planned after Second World War on the empty land between two historical parts Zemun and Belgrade.

With the establishment of the socialist, multi-ethnic State of Yugoslavia after the Second World War, Belgrade becomes the capital of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. The establishment of this new federation lay under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, at whose head stood Josip Broz Tito. Under his leadership, the post-war idea of a new society had to be materialized in the form of new urban structures and the architectural shapes of the socialist city thus constituting a new administrative, economical and cultural capital of Socialist Yugoslavia. The first urban plan of New Belgrade was adopted after the public competition in 1947, which had as its

goal functional organization within an orthogonal urban structure with two dominant buildings of the Palace of Federation and Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. This “contemporary socialist architecture” as it was defined at that time, quickly gave up the idea of socialist realism, with the conflict between Tito and Stalin in 1948. The idea of CIAM, Athens Charter and Modern movement was thus proclaimed. Already in the 1950s, the entire concept of constructing an administrative centre for the socialist country was abandoned and in next two decades social housing prevailed in New Belgrade. The failure to create a complex multifunctional spatial-urban structure produced a central space in the capital city which remained as an economic, social and finally a spatial void. New Belgrade thus never managed to fulfill either the physical or the symbolic space envisioned by the ‘socialist society of workers’ self-management’.

After the political changes and takeover of Slobodan Milosevic in the 1980s, a threatening economic crisis ensued, which brought an end to the „Golden Era“ of Yugoslavia and heralded a slow, continual decline of the Yugoslavia multi-ethnic state under Milosevic’s nationalistic leadership style. In the 1990s, this downfall climaxed in a civil war and the ensuing confusion and crisis, which led to the breakdown of the state. Subsequently, a number of new, national states declared their independence, including Serbia- Montenegro of which Belgrade is, once again, named the capital city. Post-socialistic transformation in Belgrade has turned out to be much slower than in other Central European societies and cities. Social system transition has been followed by marginalization of local economy and impoverishment of population and community as a whole. In the context of the blend of the grey economy, legal breakdown and political opportunism New Belgrade’s physical form had been hardly altered through informal actions which changed forms of occupation of the city’s physical body.

In 2000, when the government changed the first democratic post-communist regime brought many modifications in society. As a direct result of the breakup of the socialist system, the privatization of state property is in progress. This process of privatization, occurring at a time of little financial means in the state and fragmentary legal control, has produced fertile ground for corruption, profiteering, and speculations. On the other part of these people holding political or financial power, they lack the interest or opportunity to change this situation. According to this New Belgrade became not only an idea of ‘new state’ spatial representation or a housing project, it represents a contemporary experiment, which is being rapidly filled by new built structures: traditional (internal open space and outside streets) and modern (external open space and inside streets) urban patterns are overlapping in one plot. From the dominant residential function, it suddenly exploded in its numerous functions by shopping malls, restaurants, churches, services, commercial and business centers.

First planed as a municipality of around 7 000 hectares in area and for 500 000 inhabitants,¹ New Belgrade today covers an area of around 4 000 hectares and is inhabited by some 250 000 people.²

¹ Blagojević Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, Zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet.

² Blagojević Ljiljana (2005), “*Back to the Future of New Belgrade: Functional Past of the Modern City*”, in: Vienna: AESOP Congress 2005, Book of Abstracts (Vienna: Technische Universität Wien, 2005).

Hypotheses, objectives and methods of the research

Starting from hypotheses that **development of New Belgrade was marked by the mixture of the political and architectural ideology under the patronage of the state and market** this paper points out transformations of architectural and urban space of New Belgrade.

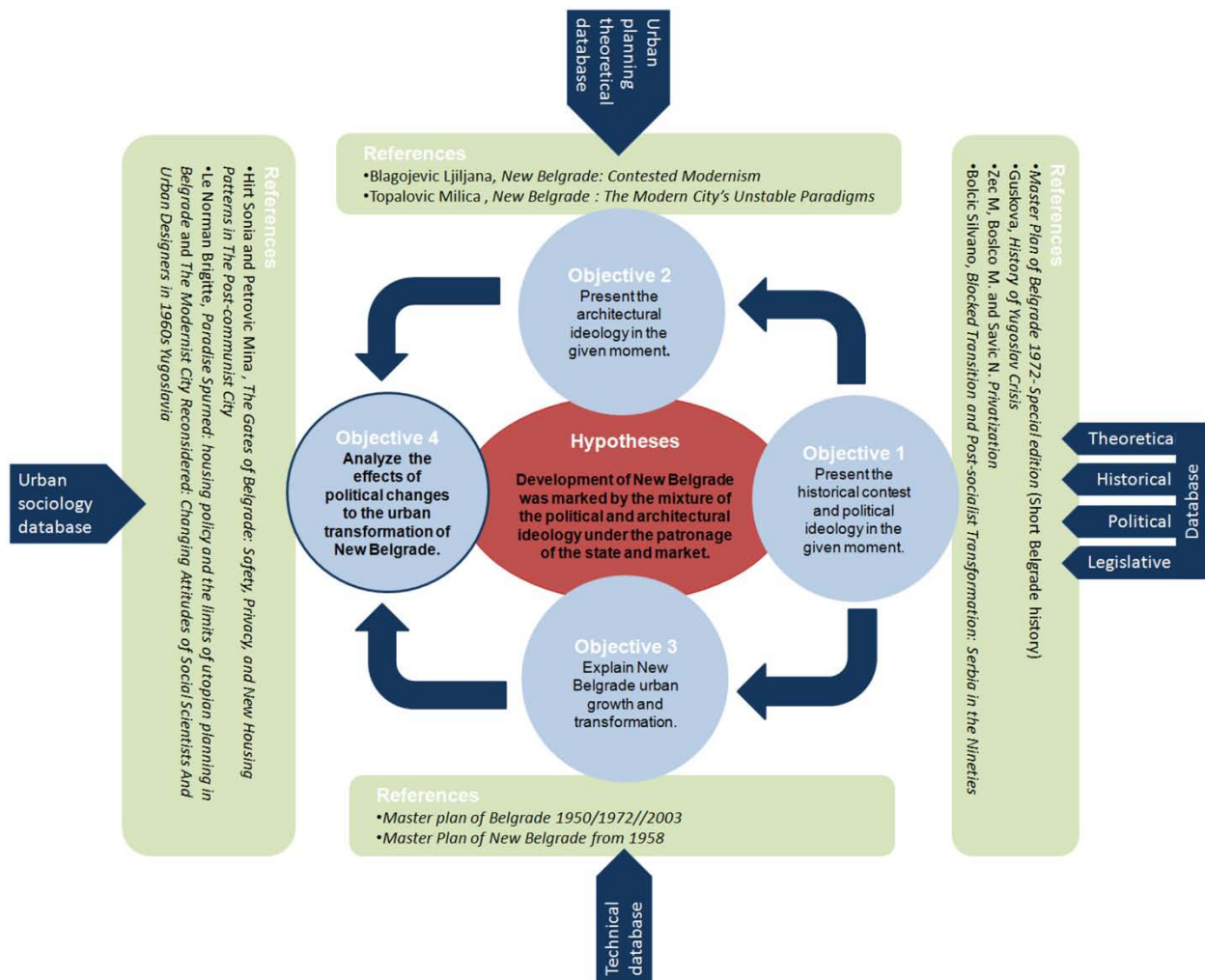


Fig. 1.2: Hypotheses, objectives and methods of the research

As a main objective it will present the effects of political and architectural ideology to the urban transformation of New Belgrade. This study will discover physical changes in the built fabric of New Belgrade influenced by the change of the political regime from socialism through blocked transition to real democratic transition.

During the historical, political and technical database analysis as well as the analyses of the legislative in the given time it will try to identify problems emerging in the development and planning of the New Belgrade urban tissue. The research will explain

political climate at the given time in the country and how the shift of the political regime and its legislation changes influenced the change in the planning processes and urban morphology of New Belgrade.

It will research theoretical literature focusing on socialism, modernism, self management, post socialistic, postmodern transitions, democracy and capitalism in domain of political ideology, urban planning and architecture. Also it will present empirical observations on changes in building functions, scales, and styles.

Through the analysis of the planned and implemented master plans from this period, transformation of strategies, analysis of the political occasions in the exact moment and its reflection to the urban planning processes the study should discover the mechanisms that provide New Belgrade with a specific character over time, enabling it to maintain, enhance, or change it with future interventions.

Outline of the dissertation

This document is organized in six chapters:

- The current chapter begins with problem statement, followed by the premise, objectives and research methods.
- Chapter two presents a brief review on historical contest that preceded the planning and construction of New Belgrade.
- Chapter three addresses on New Belgrade's planning and construction process during the socialism.
- Chapter four concentrates on the post socialistic crises during 1990s.
- Chapter five explains actual situation of urban transformation in this part of the city of Belgrade.
- Finally, chapter six draws some conclusions and recommendations of this study in relation to hypothesis and objectives.

Chapter 2:

Belgrade before construction of New Belgrade- historical overview¹

Ancient and medieval history

The Neolithic Starcevo and Vinca cultures existed in Belgrade and dominated the Balkans about 7,000 years ago. They were the first known settlements on the territory of Belgrade. Some scholars even believe that the prehistoric Vinca signs represent one of earliest known forms of alphabet.

It is important to mention that from the very beginning of the development of Belgrade we are going to talk about two different settlements on the location of today's Belgrade- Belgrade on the bank of Sava River and the Danube River and Zemun, north part of the city on the Danube River which was the city on his own till 1934.

Based on material evidence, it was determined that Belgrade and Zemun were inhabited in early Stone Age. First settlements were grown in 3000 and 2000 years BC up by the river Danube, which was the only traffic route and landmark at the time. Hardly accessible places were being chosen for easier protection. Proto-urban development of such settlements remains unclear. It is supposed that the pre-historical settlement in Belgrade was situated in the plateau of today's Upper Town situated on the ridge overlooking the confluence of the Danube and Sava River; and in Zemun, also in the plateau on the ridge overlooking the Danube River. A Celtic tribe Scordisci gave Belgrade and Zemun their first known names, respectively Singidunum and Taurunum. Position those cities remain unclear. It is not known if they were standing on places of upcoming Roman castra. Situated on the confluence of such internationally important rivers, with regular exchange of goods, Belgrade and Zemun established a leading role in this part of the Danube valley.

Urban history of Belgrade began in the 1st century AD, when the Romans created the settlements called Singidunum (later Belgrade) and Taurunum (later Zemun). In the case of Singidunum the dominant plateau overlooking the confluence of the Danube River and Sava River (Upper Town) was used for construction of castra (Roman military camps). The space was square-shaped and spread from today's Pariska and Tadeusa Kosciuska Streets to the Sava and the Danube slopes. At the beginning, the castrum was set up as earthen bulwark, but soon fortified with stone, the remains of which can be seen today near the northeastern corner of the Upper Town. Another step the Romans took to help strengthen Singidunum was the settlement of its legion veterans next to the fortress.

¹ Material for this chapter is directly retaken from:

AI. ANALYSIS OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES FOR BELGRADE FORTRESS AREA – CONSIDERATION OF THE AREA IN MASTER PLANS FOR BELGRADE (in 1923, 1950, 1985 and 2003), DETAILED URBAN PLAN AND REGULATION PLANS, The Cultural Heritage Protection Institute of the City of Belgrade. Urbanisticki zavod Beograda, GENERALNI URBANISTICKI PLAN BEOGRADA- Specijalno izdanje [Master Plan of Belgrade- Special edition], Beograd 1972, pp. 39-48.

Since the growth of the two settlements at the beginning of the new era, the city had been nearly four centuries under the Romans. It was a Roman province called Upper Moesia. Because of the good position bought, Belgrade and Zemun, had big importance for Romans. They were centers of military crews: Taurunum for the Danube fleet, and Singidunum of the Roman legion IV Flavius. Simultaneously, they also became important trade places, as the exchange of goods at the border (Limes) was performed uniquely in places with permanent military crews. A bridge across Sava River, between Singidunum and Taurunum, was built at that time. Bridges were interesting spots gathering roads from different directions in the province and that is why Singidunum became an important crossroads, an important road junction.

In the 3rd century, Singidunum reached the highest rank of settlement – it became a colony of Roman citizens. The civilian settlement covered the area from today's entrance to Kalemegdan fortress, to the Republic Square (the main city square), from Sava to the Danube. The settlement was set up accordance to Roman urbanism rules, with rectilinear street grid and two main roads which intersect- cardo and decumanus. Important traffic roads spread between city gates. The Roman forum with temples and public buildings was formed at the crossing of two important streets. The grid structure can be seen in today's Belgrade with the orientation of the streets Uzun Mirkova, Dusanova, and Kralja Petra I. The antique Singidunum was destroyed in the 5th century. The ancient Roman city was drawn to an unimportant settlement in a delimited area (a part of former castrum).

In the 4th century, when the Roman Empire was divided into Eastern and Western, Belgrade stayed at the border of those two Empires, of two different spiritual and material cultures. Political and economic tendencies from East towards middle and Western Europe, as well as invasions of different tribes coming from the North towards rich Byzantine regions, migrations (Gepidaes, Sarmatians, Ostrogoths, Avars and Huns) passed across Singidunum. Avars devastated Singidunum. The city lost its fortification, the very settlement and its name Belgrade was rebuilt as a borderline settlement of the Eastern Roman empire thanks to its exquisite geographical position and strategic importance. The remaining inhabitants built fortifications, walls and towers out of debris from the destroyed Singidunum, with houses inside. A city with narrow streets and high buildings was constructed. The medieval Belgrade shall be set around that fortified city.

On the ruins of the Western Roman Empire, lots of small feudal states were formed. By the end of the 8th century, Francia expelled barbarians from Pannonia. On the ruins of Taurunum they founded a Frank settlement Malevilla. The Slavic peoples appeared at the time and became so strong that they changed the ethnic content of all regions. In the 9th century, cities obtained Slavic names Beograd and Zemlin. The development of Belgrade and Zemun was enabled by their position on the old Roman road, which was the main artery between Byzantium and Europe. Belgrade and Zemun became places for the exchange of goods between East and West.

In 11th and 12th century, numerous pilgrims and crusades passed through Belgrade and Zemun, which considerably influenced their development. The space between the ramparts became too and the city surpassed its delimitations. Outside the fortified city, suburbs grew to become several times larger than the city within the ramparts.

In the early middle Ages there was a Byzantine fortification (castel) on the rocky cape with a suburb (area under the fortress) towards the confluence. A civilian settlement was developing in the Lower Town area towards the Danube, dominated by a fortress which was situated at the end of a prominent plateau at the corner of a former castrum. There are no sufficient data regarding the formation of suburbs on the territory of ancient Roman civilian settlement.

According to data provided by travel writers, one of those suburbs – a village – was situated on the Sava slope and later it would become a core of Serbian part of the town. Parallel with the development of the medieval city, remains of the ancient Singidunum disappeared.

Since 1284, the first Serbian king to rule over Belgrade was Dragutin, who received it as a gift from his father-in-law, the Hungarian king Stephen V. Emperor Dusan conquered Belgrade in 1334, under Hungarians' rule, later the reconquered it, in 1346, but Emperor Dusan regained it again in 1354. Following the apparition of Turks the Balkans, the direction of expanding of the Serbian country which was oriented towards the East, changed towards North-West. After Dusan's death, while his successors were in war with the Turks, Belgrade became a Hungarian fortification envisaged to protect Christian West from the Turkish threats. Following the Battle of Maritsa in 1371, and the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, the Serbian Empire began to crumble as the Ottoman Empire conquered its southern territory. The north, however, resisted through the Serbian Despotate, which had Belgrade as its capital. The capital of Serbia moved from Skopje (Emperor Dusan), via Krusevac (prince Lazar) to Belgrade (despot Stefan Lazarevic). The city flourished under despot Stefan Lazarevic, son of famous Serbian prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic. Lazarevic built a castle with a citadel and towers, of which only the Despot's tower and west wall remain. He also refortified the city's ancient walls, allowing the Despotate to resist the Ottomans for almost 70 years. During this time, Belgrade was a haven for the many Balkan peoples fleeing from Ottoman rule, and is thought to have had a population of some 40–50,000.

After despot Stevan's death in 1427 his successor DJuradj Brankovic had to return Belgrade to the Hungarians, and Smederevo became the new capital. During his reign, the Ottomans captured most of the Serbian Despotate, unsuccessfully besieging Belgrade first in 1440 and again in 1456. As it presented an obstacle to their further advance into Central Europe, over 100,000 Ottoman soldiers have launched the famous Siege of Belgrade, where the Christian army under John Hunyadi successfully defended the city from the Ottomans, wounding the Sultan Mehmed II. This battle "decided the fate of Christendom"; the noon bell ordered by Pope Callixtus III commemorates the victory throughout the Christian world to this day.



Fig. 2.1: Belgrade in 1427 and 1521 (<http://www.wikipedia.org/>)

Belgrade between East and West- Turkish conquest and Austrian invasions

It was not until August 28, 1521 (7 decades after the last siege), that the fort was finally captured by Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent and his 250,000 soldiers; subsequently, most of the city was razed to the ground and its entire Christian population (including Serbs, Hungarians, Greeks, Armenians etc.) was deported to Istanbul, to the area since known as the Belgrade forest. Realising however their importance, they immediately commenced their renewal and fortification. Belgrade was made the seat of the district (Sanjak), becoming the second largest Ottoman town in Europe at over 100,000 people, surpassed only by Constantinople. As the borders of Ottoman Empire were above Budim, during 167 years of the Turkish reign (1521-1688), both cities lost their border fortification character and became civilian settlements and important trade centers. We are unaware of all the phases of gradual erosion and internal transformation of the urban structure of the settlement which were created during middle ages and later under the influence of Islamic way of life.

In 1594, a major Serb rebellion was crushed by the Turks. Further on, Grand vizier Sinan Pasha ordered the relics of Saint Sava to be publicly torched on the Vracar plateau; in the 20th century, the Temple of Saint Sava was built to commemorate this event.

In this period, Belgrade gained position of the antique Singidunum, and in certain directions. Forming of Borough was founded on doctrines and practice of oriental urbanism. Lodging was assorted in mahalas (neighbourhoods, quarters) in the centre of which mosques were being erected. Carsijas (downtown, central trade districts) were being formed by main roads. Among then, the most prominent one was Duga Carsija (Long Street) situated on the line of today's Dusanova Street. Public, religious and community buildings were being erected in dominant positions: sarays (palaces), hans, mosques, madrasahs (Islamic schools), hammams (Turkish baths), etc.

Following the construction of those new buildings, Belgrade got oriental allure, particularly because of a number of mosques. In the urbanism of Belgrade, the Turks introduced new concept, with a lot of green colors, detached houses and nice gardens. Houses were away from one another, and as they were built on a hill, their façades and windows.

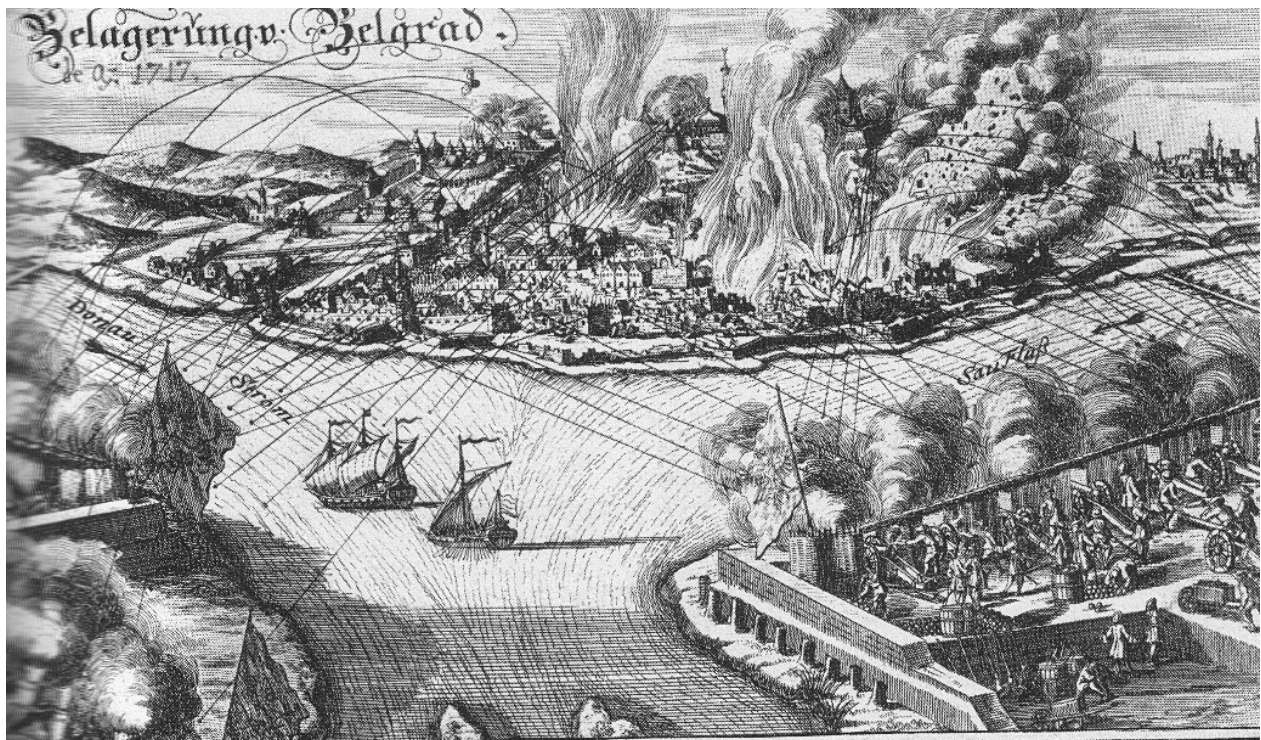


Fig. 2.2: Austrian Conquest in 1688 (<http://www.wikipedia.org/>)

The period of calm development and economic prosperity was interrupted after the Turkish defeat in Vienna in 1683. The Austrians conquered Belgrade in 1688, but the Turks gained it back in 1690 and kept it until 1717. Under the command of Eugene of

Savoy, Austrian troops entered Belgrade and stayed there until 1739 (Treaty of Belgrade). During this period, the city was affected by the two Great Serbian Migrations, in which hundreds of thousands of Serbs, led by their patriarchs, retreated together with the Austrians into the Habsburg Empire, settling in today's Vojvodina and Slavonia.



Fig. 2.3: Turkish Conquest in 1717 (www.urbel.com)

Amongst archive plans and vedutas (large-scale painting of the cityscape) of the city, the most important are those made by military engineers during shorter or longer periods of Austrian occupation of Belgrade. The earliest (1688-1690) show the range and the structure of Belgrade at the end of calm and continuous Turkish reign.

During the reign in Belgrade, from 1723 to 1736, the Austrian rule prepared plans for a radical reconstruction of the fortress and borough. Lines of Austrian fortifications rendered the territory of a former Turkish borough to one half. Apart from erecting new bulwark system, they envisaged the construction of a borough on a regular base with rectilinear streets, spacious squares and monumental buildings around, planned for the administration, army, churches, monasteries, hospitals, etc.

According to Bodenehr's plan, in the central part in front of the fortress, borough was constructed in large blocks of a nearly rectangular shape. From that point, leading to Sava River, this structure becomes irregular, with streets which follow the configuration of the 7 land, all the way up to the ridge by the river. In the riverbank area, in the direction of the fortress, there is a series of buildings, one being prominent, oriented to the bridge (pontoon bridge). Protective zone follows the riverbank line.

The Austrians realized some of their plans on the land by constructing public buildings in the baroque style, which was en vogue in the middle Europe, on that time number of Austrian plans from the first half of the 18th century show the basic structure of Belgrade, as an Austrian baroque borough.

After the Austrian occupation, the Turks, in accordance with provision of the peace agreement, reacquired Belgrade. Austria was obligated to destroy all fortifications and public buildings erected in the course of their twenty-year reign. Physical disappearance of baroque fortifications and architectural buildings did not completely eliminate the influence of Austrian urbanism on the future Turkish borough. The lines of bulwark fortifications around the settlements persisted, and consisted of embankments with palisades on the top of the trenches – canals in front of them, because of which the fortified part was later named "the Borough in the Trench". Interior composition of an 18th century Turkish borough differed from the one of the 17th century, for its more regular road grid, which Austrians had traced. During a short-term gain of Belgrade (1789–1791) the Austrians performed a detailed measuring and mapping of Belgrade, where they showed proportions and construction bloc shapes, as well as layouts of architectural buildings.

Stockely's plan from 1789 is an original autography of the engineer Captain Stockely. It remains until this day the most trustworthy cartographic source. The situation plan of the fortress and of the borough of Belgrade represents the best and most detailed physical structure of the borough, known so far, with individual houses. The plan was based on a survey, so that it was possible to compare the position of buildings and details with ulterior plans.

Belgrade between independence and World War I

The graduate conquering of independence and forming of the renewed Serbia created conditions for the development of civil-engineering and forming of the borough Belgrade. During one century, from the First Serbian Uprising (1804) until the World War (1914), Belgrade ceased to be a Turkish borough in decline, and became the capital of the independent Serbia.

Until the seventies of the 19th century, Belgrade was clearly divided into the borough, surrounded by the trench, and the city – fortress, separated from the borough by a city field – Kalemegdan. Below the Upper Town which was the fortress itself, there was the ancient borough, completely ruined, abandoned, surrounded by ramparts. The ancient line of the trench can be partially recognized in today's lines of "wreaths": Obilicev, Toplicin and Kosancicev venac, and in Skadarska Street, in the direction of the Danube.

An agreement of 1862, stipulating emigration of the Turkish population from all places in Serbia, and subsequent retreat of the Turkish fleets from the Serbian fortresses as well as cession of keys to the city to Prince Michael in 1867, in Kalemegdan, was crucial for urban development and metamorphosis of Belgrade.

Upon complete liberation from Turkish feudal dominance in 1867, all conditions precedent were met for a planned development of the borough. All Turkish manors were repurchased, in accordance with a transnational agreement. Assets invested in that aim by Serbia should have been reimbursed by selling of plots and real estate property to new owners. A situation plan was prepared for that reason comprising a kind of cadastre, which served as basis for reimbursement estimate. It also became basis for *The First Regulation Plan of the Borough in the Trench* done in 1867 by the engineer Emilijan Josimovic.

Advanced principles were integrated in the plan, regarding the rational layout of the settlement, position of public buildings, forming of squares, creation of green surfaces, hygienic and aesthetic requirements. He made one step forward in tracing of the rectangular grid of streets and regular shapes of blocs, which the Austrians had begun creating in the 18th century. Under his rectangular grid all irregularly shaped alleys from the ancient Turkish mahalas (quarters) disappeared. Streets were ranked according to their importance for the traffic, based on which their width was determined. Certain blocs and vacant areas were destined for erection of the new public buildings. Josimovic's concepts and his ambition to create city greenery testify of his wide humanitarian perception of Belgradians' needs and his aspiration to give Belgrade amenities and structure of well-developed European cities of his time. Another special quality of his Regulation plan was to shape wreaths and plantations on lines and remains of ancient bulwarks (earthen embankments, trenches and palisades which were comprised in the borough). "Wreaths" were conceived as traffic arteries – walkways for pedestrians, cavaliers and horse traffic – protected by a green belt.



Fig. 2.4: Regulation Plan of the Borough in the Trench from 1867 by Emilijan Josimovic (www.urbel.com)

He was confronted with a program of creation of a new and different shape of the city on the place of the old borough, but the one which should preserve approximately one hundred buildings of greater importance.

An important conceptual value of Josimovic's plan reflects in the fact that he showed that the future of one city cannot be solved only by technical means, by red regulation lines, but that the author of the plan must inhale life to it by words, which should depict his aspirations and humanitarian values of the very plan.

Not all ideas from Josimovic's plan were realized, but the highlight was: new regular grid of blocs and traffic routes, which was preserved as to this day. It is on the basis of his plan that Belgrade has been transformed into a modern European capital. However, Josimovic's concept of transformation of the ancient Borough in the Trench became an example for ulterior reconstructions of various boroughs in Serbia. His work, for his daring, audacious moves and contemporary ideas, for his humanitarian and urban values, considerably enriches Serbian cultural heritage.

The realization of the first regulation plan of the Borough in the Trench can be later followed in different plans, among which geodetic plan, done by the engineer Stevan Zaric in 1878, protrudes because of its details and reliability, as it comprises the entire urban territory of Belgrade.

Amongst regulation plans for Belgrade until 1914, the most important one is Master Plan for Belgrade of 1912, done by a French architect of Belgian origin Alban Chambon. On the basis of 1908 geodetic plan, Chambon realised the main idea for reconstruction of the Borough by reinterpreting of the past and civil- engineering heritage. In relation to prior proposals for Rejonska Street, the plan gives an especially valuable proposal of a Circular Boulevard, of the luxurious Haussmann style scale, thus clearly dividing urban rayon from the rest of the city. Chambon introduced characteristic traits of French urbanism to Belgrade master plan. He developed the existing line Terazije – Slavija – Savinac, and created a roundabout at several streets crossroads following the pattern of Parisian Etoile, finishing that monumental axis at the highest spot with the new St. Sava's Church.



Fig. 2.5: Master Plan for Belgrade from 1912, Alban Chambon (www.urbel.com)

Belgrade between the World Wars

On June 28, 1914 Gavrilo Princip's assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, in Sarajevo and it triggered World War I. Most of the subsequent Balkan offensives occurred near Belgrade. Austro-Hungarian monitors shelled Belgrade on July 29, 1914, and it was taken by the Austro-Hungarian Army on November 30. On December 15, it was re-taken by Serbian troops. After a prolonged battle which destroyed much of the city, between October 6 and

October 9, 1915, Belgrade fell to German and Austro-Hungarian troops. The city was liberated by Serbian and French troops on November 5, 1918, under the command. Decimated as the front-line city, for a while it was Subotica, city on the north border with Hungary that was the largest city in the Kingdom. Still, Belgrade grew rapidly, retrieving its position by the early 1920s.

After the First World War, Belgrade was emerged in new conditions which differed from those in 1914. As the capital of Yugoslavia, with its hinterland across Sava and the Danube River, it got an important role of a political, administrative, cultural and economic centre of the new state.

Upon suggestion initiated by the Association of Yugoslav Engineers and Architects, Municipal Committee of Belgrade, during assembly held on April 17th, 1919, decided to undertake all necessary preparations for an international tender for preparation of Master Plan for Belgrade. Based on the program designated on August 17th, 1921, a tender for preparation of Master Plan for development and expansion of Belgrade was published. That tender gave high hopes for urban development of the city. Master Plan from 1923, approved by the Ministry of Civil Engineering in 1924, which was drawn up under the leadership of the architect, Djordje Kovalevski, after an international invitation to tender.

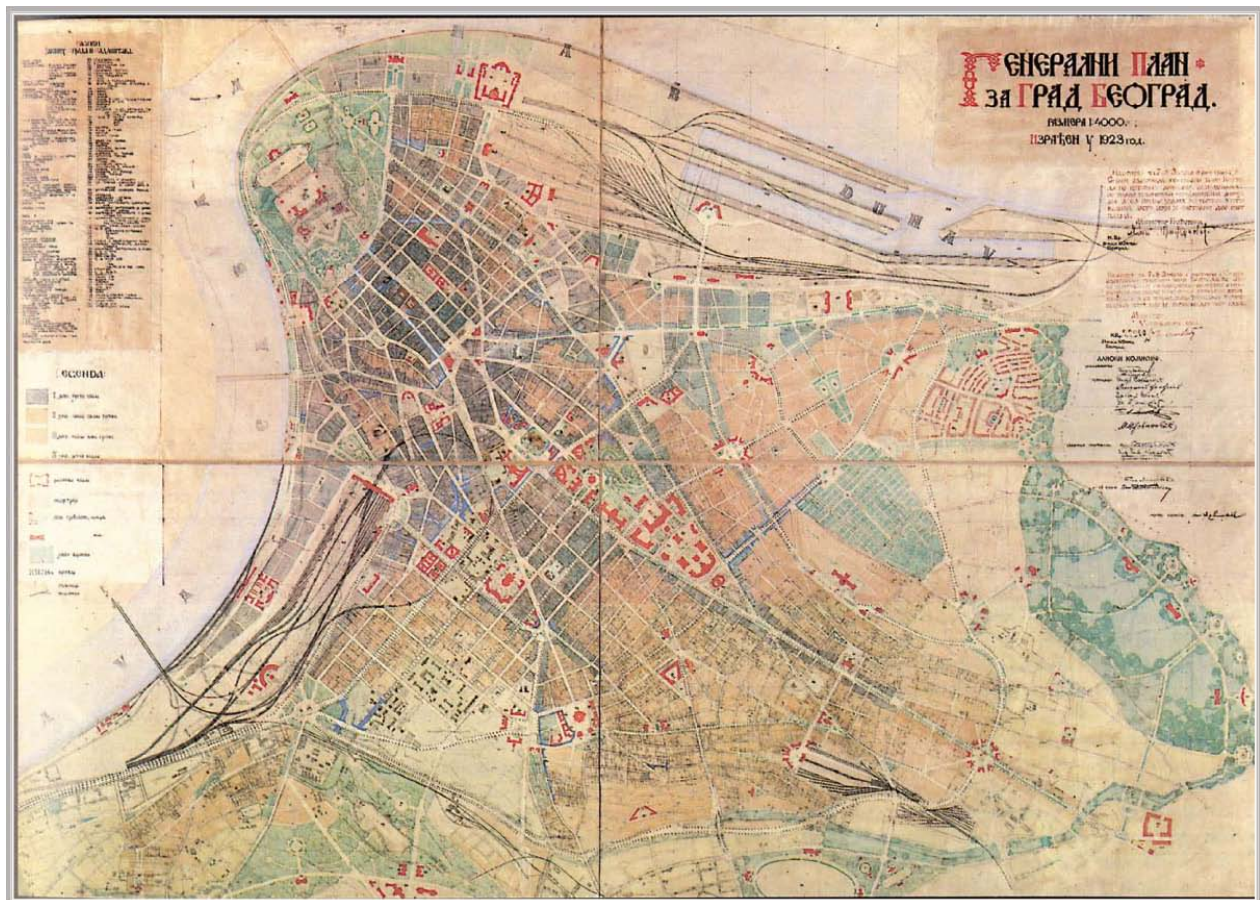


Fig.2.6: Master Plan from 1923 by Djordje Kovalevski (www.urbel.com)

After the war, Belgrade became the capital of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929 and also a field for active urban renewal and reconstruction. The Kingdom was split into banovinas, and Belgrade, together with Zemun and Pancevo, formed a separate administrative unit.

Design from the international competition “for regulation and expansion of the city of Belgrade” from 1922, under the code “Singidunum Novissima“, got the highest, second prize, mostly because of two preliminary proposals: the first one comprised the expansion of Belgrade to the Sava’s left bank to an artificial island between the existing and the Sava’s transected river bed and the second, a huge monumental axis going from Kalemegdan and 18 Upper Town towards South-East, until the designed Star by which the axis ends, with a series of newly designed squares, monuments and public utility buildings. The idea of Belgrade’s expansion to the Sava’s left bank (only without transaction of the new river bed) was at first adopted during preparation of Master Plan from 1923.

Upon a detailed examination of the received works, the jury composed of representatives from France and Switzerland, concluded that, as no work contained solutions to all issues given in the Competition Program, it was necessary to address the Experts’ Committee, which would put together and harmonize individual solutions from the winning works.

Several original ideas, regarding the transport of people across Sava River, originated that year. Civil-engineering company “Sumadija” presented a preliminary design of “air-tramway” which would connect Kalemegdan and Zemun through New Belgrade area, whilst the company “Cavlina i Sladoljev” had a similar idea about cableway, which would connect Kalemegdan and Gardos, via Big War Island Djordje Kovaljevski led the preparation of the said Master Plan. The Plan was completed in August 1923, adopted and approved by the Ministry of Civil-Engineering on July 19th, 1924. Reconstruction and further development of Belgrade started on bases thereof.

Nevertheless, in its final solution, this Master Plan did not comprise the area on the Danube’s and Sava’s left banks (New Belgrade). The expansion of Belgrade to the left bank was not accepted. The plan does not represent rules according to which the city is being built, due to its narrow frame. It caused an avalanche of unplanned constructions and creation of a chaotic suburbia outside the building area. Frequent modifications and supplements to this Plan, (1901), show that it was not flexible enough to follow the dynamization of the city development (it did not comprise all activities, nor resolved all city requirements). Also, in 19 the process of decision-making interests of certain institutions, establishments and individuals prevailed, although they were opposed to interests of the city and the entire society. They intended to resolve their own problems neglecting the big picture and thus caused non fulfillment of Master Plan in its original concept.

The realization of Master Plan was followed by a number of difficulties and that is why several important concepts remained non-realized: above all, emphasis of Belgrade’s

natural position. “Splendid” terraces for contemplation were envisaged on natural hills in the city and its outskirts, particularly in positions which provide *the most interesting perspectives of parts of the city which are situated in valleys with further perspective of rivers, mounts and heaths*.

The Plan provided development of riverbanks, i.e. creation of a boardwalk and its linking to the existing street grid. Green belt around the city was not realized, nor Rejonska Street, which would have linked all parts of the city into a harmonic whole.

After numerous discussions and critics, the new General Regulation Plan for Belgrade was done in 1927. The most significant remarks referred to incapability to realise two diagonal lines in the upper part of Dorcol quarter, and to considerably expand Borough to the area of Senjak, Dedinje, Lekino brdo, etc... The new position of Pancevo Bridge was determined by the said plan.

Pursuant to provisions of the adopted Citizens' Law of 1931, every municipality of Kingdom of Yugoslavia was held, within five-year period, to prepare their own regulation plan and the directive (Regulations book) regarding its rendering. With a huge delay, in 1939, municipal architects Danica Tomic and Djordje Kovaljevski executed General Regulation Plan for Belgrade. The Plan comprised larger territory than the Plan of 1923, but it mostly sanctioned the existing state created due to uncontrolled construction after 1918. The Sava's left bank was not comprised. The Regulations book, as integral part of the Plan, was not done. The main reason for such delay was the work on preparing on an important international competition for the city of Belgrade, which was supposed to be announced in 1941.

On the basis of **Master Plan of 1923**, a location for a new Olympic stadium for 40,000 spectators was found at the vacant plateau of Lower Town, just before the Second World War. Professor Werner March from Berlin was engaged for realisation of such an important project. Realization of this project, envisaged in the spirit of imperial architectural monumentalism, was baffled by military aggression in April 1941. This project was a part of a wider concept which was at the time developed by architect Dragisa Brasovan with a support of the Mayor of Belgrade Jevrem Tomic, promoting the idea of construction of New Belgrade on the Sava's left bank, which should, with the old part of the city, represent a harmonic urban whole. National experts opposed in vain to Brasovan's ideas for the Sava's riverbank under the Belgrade Fortress. These initiatives were stopped on April 6th, 1941, due to bombardment of Belgrade.

During this period, the city experienced faster growth and significant modernisation. Belgrade's population grew to 239,000 by 1931 (incorporating the town of Zemun, formerly in Austria-Hungary), and 320,000 by 1940. The population growth rate between 1921 and 1948 averaged 4.08% a year. In 1927, Belgrade's first airport opened, and in 1929, its first radio station began broadcasting. The Pancevo Bridge, which crosses the Danube and today connects Belgrade with Pancevo, was opened in 1935.



Fig. 2.7: Belgrade destruction in World War II (<http://www.wikipedia.org/>)

On March 25, 1941, the government signed the Tripartite Pact, joining the Axis powers in an effort to stay out of the Second World War. This was immediately followed by mass protests in Belgrade and a military coup d'état. Consequently, the city was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe on April 6, 1941, when up to 24,000 people were killed. Yugoslavia was then invaded by German, Italian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian forces, and suburbs as far east as Zemun, in the Belgrade metropolitan area, were incorporated into a Nazi state, the Independent State of Croatia.

Just like Rotterdam, which was devastated twice, by both German and Allied bombing, Belgrade was bombed once more during World War II, this time by the Allies on April 16, 1944, killing about 1,100 people. The most of the city remained under German occupation until October 20, 1944, when it was liberated by Red Army and the Communist Yugoslav Partisans. On November 29, 1945, Marshal Josip Broz Tito proclaimed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia in Belgrade (later to be renamed to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on April 7, 1963).

Chapter 3:

The planning and early materialization of New Belgrade - socialist or modernist city?

The part of the city we today call New Belgrade is located in the area of Bezanijsko polje limited with right bank of the Danube River and the left bank of Sava River, stretching between the historical cities of Zemun and Belgrade. Until 1918 the terrain of future New Belgrade had the status of a borderline vacuum running along the swamp. Positioned on higher ground and facing each other over the defensive clearance of the valley, Ottoman Belgrade and Habsburg Zemun developed separately and the territory of New Belgrade had thus remained empty throughout the course of history.¹ Devoid of any urban structure, it fulfilled the function of a cordon sanitaire, observed and controlled as no-connection-zone between the Orient, where Belgrade, as it were, marked its end point, and the Occident, of which Zemun was the, first, even if modest and marginal, port of call.²



Fig. 3.1: The location of future New Belgrade (New Belgrade 1961)

¹ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , p. 3.

² Blagojevic Ljiljana, *NEW BELGRADE: THE CAPITAL OF NO-CITY'S-LAND*, web page:
http://artefact.mi2.hr/_a04/lang_en/theory_blagojevic_en.htm

New Belgrade in planning

First ideas of creating a new Belgrade on the left bank of Sava River (1922-1941)

In the short period between the World Wars, with the unification of the Kingdom of Serbs Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, when the river Sava ceased being a state border, various planning strategies for the urbanization of this terrain were elaborated. Common denominator of all of these, otherwise widely divergent strategies was that they primarily envisaged the new development on this site as an expansion of, already uncontrollably sprawling, city of Belgrade.³

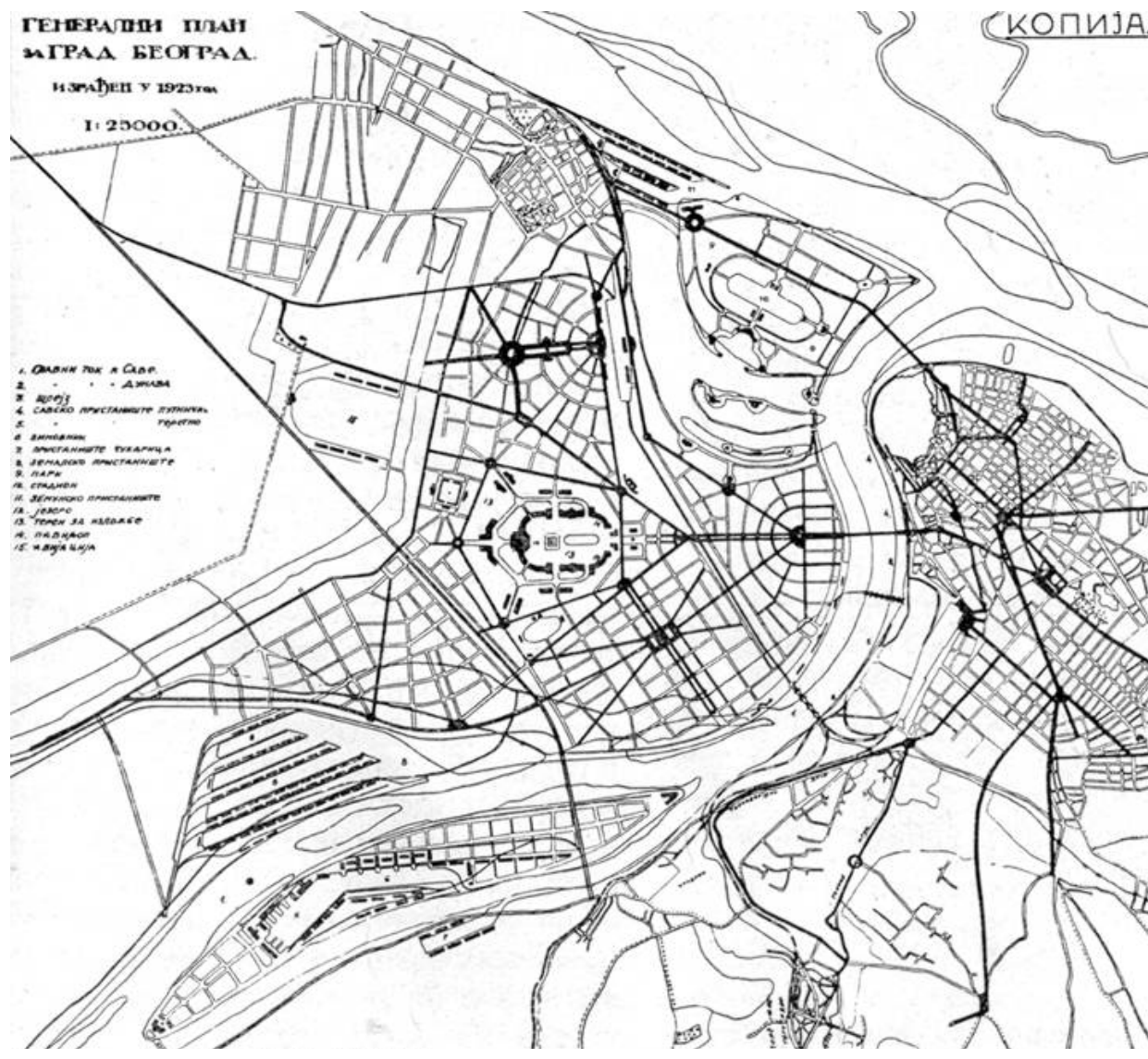
In order to prepare the new **Master Plan of Belgrade in 1922** an international contest was published. In the paper called *Singidunum Novissima*, from the team of authors from Vienna the first ideas were set for the construction of the city on the left bank of Sava River. This contest solution has caused strong critics as inadequate in the existing socio-economic situation. It treated Belgrade as a metropolis modeled city on the capitols of the world's great empires completely negating the existing urban morphology of the city. In this plan the left bank of Sava River was treated as a modern urban structure in the countryside. Architects Rudolf Perce, Erwin Ilz and Erwin Bock in their plan propose to dig a fairway through the Bezanijsko polje and that between it and Sava amphitheater form a river island. On the formed ground a strict geometric matrix with symmetrically organized park areas and free-trade fair exhibition hall facilities would be set. River island is intended as an area that compensates for the lack of greenery in a densely built city center of Belgrade.⁴

The **General Regulation plan of Belgrade from 1923** represented a compromised solution between real possibilities and the idea of enlargement of the city to the left bank of the river Sava River presented through the contest solution of Vienna team, currently unreal for realization. The author of The General Plan, **Djordje Kovaljevski** in the field of construction stayed in the building coverage limit of region. But, through the proposed Illustrative city plan on the left bank of Sava River, he gave a vision of expansion of Belgrade to the west and its linking with Zemun. Kovaljevic's plan was a traditionalist art city project, made with the idea that one final plan could solve the complex issue of growth and development of Belgrade. Also, a set concept of a new urban unity of the city on the left bank of Sava River was the ambition of the elite to show the progress of the young state and prove that it is an integral part of developed Europe at least on paper. "Megalomania in monumental proportions of these plans is a clear urban expression of the ambition that the expansion of the city is identified with the development of modern capitalism and the country involved in the progressive course of history."⁵

³ Ibid.

⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.21-23.

⁵ Ibid. pp.23-24.



During the third decade of the 20th century, after the adoption of the General Plan, in the wider intellectual circles the conclusion has been made that the plan is practically impossible to implement in the given economic conditions. The view of experts was perhaps best defined by Czech architect **Jan Dubovy** employed in the Belgrade municipality administration. He said that it was a big mistake that the plan does not regulate all the suburbs at the same time. The plan is designed in such a way that the city Administration cannot implement it because of its megalomaniac structure and that only a few years after the adoption it was changed in its main aspects due to the lack of finance.⁶

⁶ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.24-25.

Czech architect in his lecture "Garden City" from 1924 highlights his views on alternatives to this kind of planning. As a supporter of a modern urban concept, he believed that Belgrade should be planned as a garden city, a city for future generations where architects and engineers will plan housing and neighborhoods in which people would healthy and happy live. The conclusions of his lecture, spoke of Belgrade as the capital of all Yugoslavs, but also the city that goes beyond national and Balkan frameworks developing as a metropolis of all Slavs. Hi introduced his ideas through a sketch of the metropolis called "Future big Belgrade". It proposes the future growth of Belgrade up to 1961 as a city of 100km² which would be developed around the historic center in two main directions: Belgrade's connection to the river and with Zemun and Pancevo on the one hand, and integration with the surrounding villages (today's urban municipalities on the periphery) on the other.⁷

In the interwar Belgrade an example of the concept of the garden city cannot be found. But the Plan of regulation of the terrain and the project of the villages on the right side of The Bridge of Zemun of Danish investor **group Hogaard & Schultz A / S and Kampsax A / S** is one of the attempts. Among the younger generation of modernists, such as Milorad Pantovic, it is characterized as a concept of "sterile isolation." The project included one part of the territory of New Belgrade, land of 720 000 m², bordered by the Belgrade-Zemun on one side and the Danube River quay on the other. In the years before the war in this region the partial arranging of the swampy area between Belgrade and Zemun began.⁸

Although since 1934 Zemun was administratively attached to Belgrade in spite of good transport links, after the construction of a new suspension bridge in 1934 and tram lines in 1935, it has developed as a separate city in its urban plan. A project of Danish architects based on the principles of isolation and self-sufficient settlement also does not establish a link between these two parts of the city.⁹ As the architect Milos Somborski commented, the proposal of the Danish group "... had no relationship to Belgrade nor Zemun, and did not take care of further processing and uses of the terrain between Sava River and Bezanijska kosa", so therefore its implementation was only "... one more link in the conglomerate of unrelated Belgrade urban areas."¹⁰

Since the war has ended the reclamation and construction of the neighborhood, and the next General plan in 1939 did not include the court of New Belgrade, the only objects implemented on the stretch between Belgrade and Zemun were within the Belgrade fairgrounds complex built in 1937.¹¹

⁷ Ibid, pp.25-26.

⁸ Ibid, p.27.

⁹ Ibid, p.28.

¹⁰ Somborski Milos (1951), *Razvoj Beograda izmedju dva rata [Developement of Belgrade between the two world wars]*, Arhitektura Zagreb 1-4, pp.46.

¹¹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.28.

Modernist city concept according to the CIAM's dogma

During the 1930s changes in understanding of the architecture and urbanism through the implementation of a number of modern architecture movements in the centers of the young state are revealed. This was also visible through the major breakthrough of modern urban ideas. Significant turnover in relation to the dominant conservatism and traditionalism of the third decade of the 20th century is seen through the formation of architectural-urban theory and practice of modernism influenced primarily by **Le Corbusier and CIAM**. CIAM had a major impact on the construction of modern resorts and cities worldwide, through its publication of number of documents relevant to the acceptance of modern ideas of architecture and urban design.¹²

The first program document of CIAM was **The Declaration of architects** collected in the international preliminary competition for modern architecture held in 1928. It basically dictates the necessity of understanding of architecture and urbanism, in wider socio-political and economic frames, and suggests a rejection of previous motion-aestheticism and academic. The declaration was well-known to Yugoslavian architects and it represented the most important base of their operations. The first paragraph of the Declaration, called The General economy emphasizes the importance of rationalization and standardization. In construction in the Yugoslavian context it could only be understood broadly, as a general principle for the underdeveloped construction industry. The second item named Urbanism has defined in general terms modern, functional planning of cities. Its basic thesis was that aesthetic frameworks do not determine urbanism but that it must be based solely on function. At this point also emphasized in particular that The Master plan of territorial organization is basis for planning and construction. The third paragraph, Architecture and the public highlight the necessity of the new architecture principles promotion by architects. Through the closing point, Architecture and its relationship to the state the chapter rejects academicism as a state style and once again highlights the advantage of placing architecture based on economic reality.¹³

Yugoslav modernists of interwar period had fought through public action for recognition of their ideas as well as the change of an attitude of the state for the education of architects and public procurements. In Belgrade, this process has been primarily developed through the activity of members of the **Group of architects** of the modern movement in the period between the 1928 and 1934, with a significant contribution from the architect **Nikola Dobrovic**. In a direct work of CIAM several architects from Croatia were included. They eventually formed the Yugoslav section. Besides them, the members of the Working Group of Zagreb were invited to be guests at exhibitions of CIAM. Also, a preliminary impact of modernism in the Yugoslavian matrix was executed by architects who worked in the studio of Le Corbusier in Paris. In the promotion of the ideology of CIAM in Belgrade, the architect **Branko Maksimovic** was actively engaged,

¹² Ibid, p.29.

¹³ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp. 29-30.

although never as a member of this organization. As a municipal architect, he has been dealing with practical solutions, "the apartment for a minimum existence" in projects ordered by Belgrade municipality government, since 1928.¹⁴

The ideas and principles of CIAM have already been built in the foundations of the new Yugoslav architecture in the thirties, despite being only a few Croatian architects participating actively in the work of the organization. When in 1947. the big concert was announced for the New Belgrade, among the participants were many architects formed in the spirit of the modern movement in the interwar period. This competition shows best how ideas of CIAM have already been deeply rooted in the theory and practice of Yugoslav architecture and urbanism, as well as how they are implemented in the new socio-political conditions created after the Second World War and 1945.¹⁵

One of the most significant breakthroughs of modernism in the interwar period in Serbia started in the general Yugoslav competition for the zoning of Novi Sad. It is very important for introducing the principles of modern urbanism in Yugoslav planning. Among the rewarded works, but also marginalized works on the competition, the works of Le Corbusier's associates' **Milorad Pantovic** and Juraj Najdhart were highlighted.¹⁶

At the end of the 1930s, the modern movement and its ideas were completely exhausted by the changes of the political situation in Europe and the explosion of the two dominant ideologies of totalitarianism: the Stalinist Socialism in the USSR and National Socialism in Germany. "In such a context, CIAM's discourse comes to the key exchange rate. Under the influence of the real threat of Stalinism, the CIAM IV made the complete resistance of socialism and the USSR and the left-wing line of the organization, which in its first phase, had been led by architect of new objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit). At the same time modern movement experienced a complete defeat and the ban in Nazi Germany.¹⁷

In his document, named Contribution to the memory of CIAM, several months before the death, **Ernest Weissman** writes about the change of spirit and character of the organization. He emphasized the change of its policy that was not the attitude toward the principles of planning, technology and construction methods, but the relationship to socio-political factors. He says that CIAM was formed as an elite, exclusive organization, as a closed circle of the international elite. He believes that the discrepancy occurred in treating this elitism as the necessary in order to survive by one part of the group and opposed who taught that the movement should spread and that people should have the right to decide as someone who has political experience and collective knowledge of what his real needs are. Weissman also writes that during the most famous CIAM-IV that took place on board between Marseille and Athens, and in Athens in 1933. the two documents of this Congress were formed. One document was in apolitical context and its author was Le Corbusier himself, who represented the political wing of the moderate and de-politicized organization. In the second version, in

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 30.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 31.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 41.

whose preparation Weissman was involved, a creative and professional integration of technological elements of the socio-political elements in accordance with the ideas of the leftist wing was created. Weissman's text is a valuable document about the turning point from politics, or ideology to the technical issues of urban planning.¹⁸

From this Congress up to CIAM VII in 1949 the dominant influence of Le Corbusier is identified. If the CIAM VI is seen as the culmination of modernism, then for CIAM V, held during the International Exhibition in Paris, can be seen as the crisis of modernism. CIAM's program, as well as **Le Corbusier's "Pavilion of the new age"**, was clear but not enough powerful opposition to the war and totalitarian ideologies and their architectural models. "The perspective of war in Europe was almost certain and a Peace Avenue (Avenue de la Paix) of the Paris exhibition are marked symbolically, architecturally striking complementary representative of two dominant totalitarian ideology: the pavilions of Germany and the USSR. In the context of the obvious tensions the split between left and technocratic lines within the CIAM appears only as a squabbling unbreakable friendly ally in the fight against right-wing totalitarian spirit. We could say that in the years before the war, both of the CIAM lines, despite the mutual disputes, were the only point of resistance and opposition to more dominant totalitarian model of architecture and urbanism, and eminently emancipated as the bearers of the spirit of the modern movement."¹⁹

Timing in which Pantovic, with the team of colleagues from Le Corbusier's studio, worked on a visionary plan for Novi Sad coincides with the time period of dissension within the CIAM. Because of that its position in relation to the internal differences in the movement can be easily explained. In the program article of the contest, published under the title "Are today's urban systems inadequate, and even if they are, is there a possibility of a new system?" , the author clearly states his position in relation to the totalitarian model and implies a policy plan for which it stands. This article is considered one of the most important manifestos of modern urban thinking from this period. Pantovic criticizes and rejects the individualism and isolation of garden city in it, but is totally opposed to the concept just as the city that includes concentrated abolition of private land ownership. Not speaking specifically about Stalinism and Nazism as two dominant ideologies Pantovic warns of consequences of totalitarianism in urban planning.²⁰ He says: A group of collectivist direction, inspired by modern social and economic and political movement... from the population of the town creates a huge military camp, in which resides a group of people, disciplined, obedient in all manifestations of life, where circulation is provided by the rhythm of the minute. It awaits the arrival of a purely material society, which will provide housing, supply, education and entertainment... Instead highlighting the individuality of human types, here it uniformity is created... Collectivist town is intended to serve the order of a society, which is not known with certainty whether it will one day be born.²¹

He says that the idea of individualism relied on the free market while socialism is

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 42.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Pantovic, "Are today's urban systems inadequate, and even if they are, is there a possibility of a new system?", pp. 256.

basically the idea of closed borders. In individualism, the role of "omnipotent" is played by the price while in socialism every human activity was subordinated to the state monopoly, even if it is human thought itself. About this Ljiljana Blagojevic sad: What is the basic of Pantovic's settings and strategies, as he says himself, in the basis of a new urban system, is precisely the CIAM's super political urban order, justice and political community life, which includes a balance of general and special interests, public and private property, or synthesis of individuality and community.²²

From 1937 to 1939 Pantovic stayed in Paris and the U.S. Upon his return to Belgrade in 1940 he works on another very modern urban town planning, unusual for the dominant models in practice, this time a proposal of radical reconstruction of Belgrade. This plan is the reconstruction of the existing city and it does not propose any extensive construction of a new, modern part of town on the left bank of Sava River.²³

The plan of the reconstruction of Belgrade from the 1940s Pantovic developed in the frame of the Belgrade Tourism Fair Exhibition. The exhibition was not with a significant character because the Tourist organization focused on the organization of fairs next year. However, during the war tourism strategy had to change and from next year was focused on tourism "at home". Also it is important to mention that in that period tourism is promoted not as a privilege of the rich but as a mass phenomenon.²⁴

At the fair exhibits in 1941. Pantovic's work was not exposed again, but he was only invited as an expert consultant. As a general context of the exhibition and the works shown on it, can be concluded that Pantovic's work did not fit into the concept of the exhibition. "The exhibition is therefore designed as a team highlighted the politics of war and the war itself in order to support the political campaign that the security of the state can achieve neutral position in a given international context."²⁵

"Modernism of Pantovic's plan is not only subversive compared to Nazi cultural propaganda, but rather in the context of the war in Europe, to intervene in the public sphere as a specific Belgrade, urban anti-war campaign ... A key influence on the course had Pantovic participation in Le Corbusier's setting "Pavilion of the new age" at the Paris exhibition in 1937." In support of this it is extremely important to note that the Fair in October, in 1940 with great honor and the presence of Prince Lazar was the exhibition of German art new construction (Neue Deutsche Baukunst) and Pantovic's plan can be seen as an absolute contradiction in relation to the totalitarian model.²⁶

His campaign for peace and development of industrial production of houses instead of weapons Le Corbusier dates back to his book *La Ville Radiuese* from 1935. This idea is even more strongly emphasized in the monograph "Pavilion of the new age." Pantovic's concept for the reconstruction of Belgrade carried the same vision. But Pantovic has

²² Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p. 43.

²³ Ibid, pp. 43-44.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 45.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 45.

²⁶ Ibid, pp. 46-47.

added another dimension: the dimension of passive protection from air attack, since the work started with beginning of the war in Europe. "The plan, in fact, suggests "Corbusierian surgery destruction" of parts of the urban fabric of the historic Belgrade and reconstruction of the key zones, elimination of main and street-corridors and setting high objects in free space. This organization of the city by Le Corbusier is the most appropriate passive defense of the war from the air. In Pantovic's idealized city, fully integrated into the new structure of the Belgrade Fortress and Kalemegdan as monuments of culture and a place of historical forts, New Belgrade, however, was not planned as built structures, but as a large landscaped garden. It had been designed as, modern urban structure developed on the right bank of Sava River, assuming the removal and relocation of the railway station facilities. The priority of this proposal modern reconstruction of Belgrade was therefore, surgical intervention in the historical center, not the construction of a modern city in an empty field of Bežanijsko polje." There is a presumption that exactly this approach is what disqualified Pantovic from the postwar debate on possible solutions for the construction of New Belgrade.²⁷

Just before the beginning of the war and the bombing of Belgrade in 1941 another project of radical reconstruction was presented to the public. The project in its coverage area had a modern New Belgrade. This was a plan by the architect **Dragisa Brasovan**. The project, called "Sava New Town- City of Belgrade" was conceived as a modern city of 500 000 inhabitants. It is planned next to the field of 360 000 m² which was prepared by the Danes. He planned extra 6.3 million m² to fill in order to get the whole area needed for construction. In New Belgrade the construction of a new railway station near the airport on Bežanija, was planned, a large park with sports stadium and playgrounds with pavilion planned for the future World's Exhibition and a number of cultural facilities (museums, theaters, churches). Traffic artery in the new part of the town was set radial. It is proposed to connect the Great War Island with quay and its transformation into a peninsula. At the junction of Sava River and The Danube River he proposed a monumental monument, and on the little War Island a public beach. The new town was planned in harmony with the old Belgrade. Since the plan is not reproduced this description is based on detailed view of the press which was given to them by the main architects.²⁸

The main feature of the Brasovan's project is relocation of a railway station. to the location near "Mostar". This way, provided the floor area of about 1.2 km² for the descent of Belgrade to the river. In addition to the existing Brasovan provides the construction of two more bridges: one at the position near "Mostar" next to the railway station and the second in the direction of Slavija Square. In his plans there are also studies of Sava dock. It was conceived as a monumental building with a colonnade of arches, which emphasizes the horizontality and the dominant form of vertical building with a tower that reaches a height of Kalemegdan Park. This facility would strongly dominate from the other side of the river.²⁹

²⁷ Ibid, pp. 47-48.

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 48-49.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 49.

In the study, Brasovan has also developed a project of design and decoration of the Upper Town and Kalemegdan ridge. In the dominant horizontal composition drawing, featured on the horizon are the three rappers. The first in the center consists of two massive blocks of green to the left and right of the vertical axis of symmetry. The other are two end points of the existing cathedral on the right and the monumental building with a dome on the left. This view from New Belgrade to Kalemegdan was presented as an ideal image. Unfortunately, in conditions of war the ideal image is lost and only six weeks later the bombs were falling on Belgrade.³⁰

In the postwar period, when the question of the planning and construction of Belgrade on the left bank of Sava River arose again and when Nikola Dobrovic as he says "on plain paper" formed a conceptual sketch of New Belgrade with very complex and developed scheme of traffic, the plan does not mention any reference from Brasovan's plan. Brasovan's role in the Serbian town planning is deleted in full and until recently was not mentioned, and it is quite clear why, "Brasovan's plan, however indirectly, in a field of politics and cultural politics of the Third Reich. Therefore, it is clear how and why this plan is virtually erased in the postwar period, although that erasure is, again, an act of deliberate concealment in the name of ideology."³¹

Despite the undeniable influence of politics and ideology, with this plan all the previous "romantic and pastoral ideas and strategies of New Belgrade" are deleted.³² This is actually the first plan in which the New Belgrade is seen as a modern city, as the business center of the future metropolis. Basing his idea on the most modern principles of urban planning at the time, Brasovan indicated almost all matters of New Belgrade, which are still topical: "building the modern city of 500 000 inhabitants, with the center that becomes the City of metropolis, functional and harmonious connection to the historical center, relocation of the railway junction from Sava amphitheater and the new railway station near "Mostar", building new bridges, and planning of monumental buildings-churches, theaters and museums, as a framework for a new town."³³

According to the Master Plan from 1923 the only materialized project on the left bank of Sava River was Belgrade Fair. The arrangements for realization of Belgrade Fairground started in 1936. The basic concept of the project was radial distribution of pavilions around one central building - tower, which had two main functions: to be an exhibition pavilion, and to be an urban mark, visible from distant parts of the city. It was a monumental modern open plan. Building works were very rapid, and in 1938 the first exhibition was held in seven big pavilions, and in more than 20 small private pavilions. However the Nazi occupation forces transformed Belgrade Fairground complex into the concentration camp. At first, it was mostly for Jewish people, who were brutally killed, and later Serbs, Roma people and political prisoners were taken there.³⁴

³⁰ Ibid, p. 53.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid, p. 54.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Vukotic-Lazar Marta, Djokic Jasmina, *Complex history as a source of planning problems: Old Belgrade fairground*, Spatium 2006 Volume , Issue 13-14, pp. 34-40.



Fig. 3.3: Old Belgrade Fairground 1938 (<http://www.oldtajmeri.rs>)

New Belgrade in planning

The capital city concept (1946-1948)

Like other East European capitals, Belgrade experienced rapid expansion in the post-World War II era. In 1940s it was anticipated that the city would grow from about 300,000 to 1,000,000 in twenty years. In order to absorb the projected population influx while at the same time improving the quality of life in the city, it was anticipated that the city would both become denser and expand.³⁵

The first post-war and also modernist plan of New Belgrade was made by architect **Nikola Dobrovic** in **1947**. The plan titled "**Sketch of Belgrade's regulation on the left bank of Sava River**" was eminently ideological concept of building a new town on the left bank of Sava River. This project will significantly influence the change of the city character and on Belgrade becoming the capital of the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.³⁶

The initiative to build a town on the left bank of Sava River came from the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and was under constant supervision of Marshal Tito, the Yugoslav Communist Party Politburo, Serbia and the City Party Committee. Also.³⁷ The building program for the capital had been tailored by the communist party leadership and was still largely undefined, except for the two key institutions – the seat of the presidency of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (now known

³⁵ Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, p.10.

³⁶ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.58.

³⁷ Ibid, p.59.

colloquially as the 'Federation Palace' and officially as the 'Palace of Serbia') and the seat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (now the Usce tower). Still unclear the remaining building program was entirely oriented toward governmental structures such as ministries and diplomatic facilities.³⁸



**Fig. 3.4: "Sketch of Belgrade's regulation on the left bank of Sava river", Nikola Dobrovic, 1947
(Transformation of New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation)**

After the Second World War there had been a change in the socio-political conditions and therefore the status of Belgrade was changed. From the capital of the monarchy, the city should have been transformed into the capital of new republic. The best position for the formation of the city in this context was Bežanijsko field, for centuries no man's land between East and West and area on which urban structure had never been formed before. "Only in such a place, without the urban history of the city, could have been directly and freely established super historical reality in creating the capital of the "people's democracy", and later socialism."³⁹

Since his arrival in the liberated Belgrade in 1944 Dobrovic becomes one of the leaders of regeneration and reconstruction of Belgrade, first as Construction Minister of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, and later as director of the newly created Urban

³⁸ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished, p. 9

³⁹ Ibid, p.58.

Institute of Serbia. Of all grand designs of the Institute in the postwar period certainly the most important one is the construction of the new Belgrade.⁴⁰

However, Dobrovic doesn't base his concept on ideological grounds, but basically on understanding the laws of modernistic development of the city and region, and the solution of Belgrade's traffic problems." Dobrovic's approach to the analysis is of an architect and urban planner. He considers, as well as Le Corbusier, that these are two completely inseparable professions. In addition, he does his work comprehensively and meticulously, by the previously created sketch from 1946 entitled "Renewal and Development of Belgrade: contours of the future city."⁴¹

In his creative approach the principles of Athens Charter are clearly notable. By these principles urban and suburban traffic needs to be revised. He considered the main point of his concept the relocation of railway traffic on the right bank of Sava River and the suspension of the so-called railway junction. Opening Belgrade to the river fronts would be enabled this way. It is unknown whether Dobrovic was informed about the studies done by his colleagues Pantovic and Brasovan few years before, but it is clear that all three studies conducted the same idea, the idea of relocation of the railway junction on the other side of the river, as well as the modernist approach of free-form objects in the green field.⁴²

Relocated new railway station now becomes "the first (planned) object in the landscape of New Belgrade, and represents the center of new city to which the centre of historical city and Terazijaska terasa are orientated". Dobrovic's study from the early twenties of previous century revolves around this idea.⁴³ It has been predicted that on the location of the new station the main urban traffic routes meet and again separate: the railway via the new bridge on Ada Lake and road traffic through the renewed Branko's Bridge and the new bridge. It is interesting that in the realization of New Belgrade the idea of connection with the historical center has been almost completely lost. Not only that the idea of orientation and spreading of the city center toward new city hasn't been done, but also the panoramic view of New Belgrade from the old part of the town is only possible from Kalemegdan fortress.⁴⁴

This study, relying on Belgrade as a big city in a future, considers that one railway station still can please all its needs. Accordingly to that, Dobrovic thinks that the most efficient solution is to build one station on area of New Belgrade. The station would serve only for long-distance traffic, while in the same building or squares around the station would be provided uninterrupted transition on local transportation. Even though, in the moment of designing the plan, the position of the railway station was on the outskirts of the city, totally eccentric in regard to Belgrade and Zemun, Dobrovic augmented his idea by the fact that the future city would become the center of gravity.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.59.

⁴¹ Ibid, p.60.

⁴² Ibid, p.61.

⁴³ Ibid, p.63.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.66.

Sketch of the new town on the left bank of Sava River has been done according to the new socio-political situation, in an empty field and on the blank paper and was expression of the determined political will. It has almost completely neglected the references to the existing historic center and Zemun. The only reference point in Dobrovic's plan has been located in the Upper Town of Kalemegdan fortress. At this point Dobrovic envisioned construction of a new Assembly, Pantheon and Museum of National Liberation Struggle. The idea of representing the Parliament as the symbol of historical change from monarchy to republic by changing the look of the place where the city had been born Dobrovic shared with Slovenian architect Joze Plecnik in his project for Ljubljana Parliament. Both architects in their projects on some level reflect the idea of the political concept of Czech President Tomas Masarzka to rebuild the City of Prague. Regarding to this concept Masarzka said: people consider the castle as national monument. Therefore we have to transform the monarchy castle into the democratic one.⁴⁶

It can be assumed that Dobrovic, at the time of making the sketch, was preoccupied with the idea of abolishing private ownership of land and the establishment of universal, shared public good, for him, embodied in the scheme of city in green (but we will emphasize, not the concept of garden city). Focusing at the same time on analysis of the historical city and creation of a new one he suggests the same principle for these two completely different urban areas: the principle of city in garden.⁴⁷

According to the Dobrovic's basic program setting, a new city was supposed to represent the most significant urban composition of future Belgrade. It would include ministries and government offices, as well as the most important and most dominant building in the building composition of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Since he had worked without the program, as a starting point Dobrovic took the existing number of ministries in that period, which he grouped in podcasts. Considering the pressure on traffic, which will be caused by switching from one to the other side of the river, Dobrovic once again emphasized the importance of transportation facilities. Therefore he suggested construction of the new bridge and introduction of modern public transport with the metro line and urban rail on one of the existing bridges. Starting from the basic idea that the Federal Assembly should be set on Kalemegdan, for the composition of New Belgrade Dobrovic proposed that the composition should be made by horizontal lines making the contrast to Kalemegdan on opposite side of Belgrade. According to the directives of the Minister of Construction, Vlada Zecevic, buildings of Central Committee and Government have been planned on a limited area of the Sava and Danube river branch, in the coastal zone from 150 to 200m wide, which had already been poured and made ready for the new development.⁴⁸

If we compare sketch of Dobrovic's future city with sketch of Djordje Kovaljevic from

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.68.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.70.

1923 we will see that both are very similar in terms of urban form and the radial matrix. However, the opposite direction of the radial streets matrix shows the important differences in approaches the two architects. During the period in which Kovaljevic worked planning process was focused on the strategy of growth and expansion of the historic center, and the continuity of the urban matrix. During the fifties, planning strategy was changed significantly. The discontinuity of the urban matrix becomes the most important, meaning the break with the old Belgrade. "This paradox is shown in the cooperation of two urban bases, "the full" in the plan Kovaljevski and "the empty" in Dobrovic's proposal. The contrast of black-full-built and white-blank-inbuilt space becomes main indication of the differences between two categories of urban space within the solid matrix of the traditional city, and isolated objects in the continuum of empty space, greenery and sun of the modern city."⁴⁹

"According to its content the sketch represents the plan of administrative city of ideal state, and in form, in some sense follows the scheme of an ideal city. If we see Dobrovic's sketch in this context, then its radial form in a way, underscores its basic utopian impulse. Despite the fact that the radial composition of Dobrovic's sketch, by its form, can be also seen as homage of the mythical power of classical utopias, this plan means a revolution in urban planning of Belgrade. With its subversive setting of the traffic planning solutions as a priority, it marks the end and, simultaneously, a new beginning, which introduces an activist utopia, utopia in draft form for the future...This structure does not indicate some sort of ideological or social hierarchies, because in the heart of such a system a modern railway station has been planted ... Even though he fully strived to achieve big ideological project, as the project of New Belgrade, it is clear that Dobrovic refuses to reduce planning only to the reinterpretation of ideology. What follows from this plan is non political way as the way of intellectual individual to bow to the power."⁵⁰

In new, Socialist conditions after the war, Dobrovic looked for a foothold in "avant-garde working class." Through his initial author's project he offers an ideal sketch of a new city, however the city closed for the population. "If we accept that modern planning proved all inability in individual designing, it becomes clear that only a complete failure of Dobrovic's concept could also be a basic prerequisite for New Belgrade to become a modern city."⁵¹

Dobrovic's sketch for urban organization of New Belgrade didn't give a solution. It only opened the string of important questions about the size, uses, spirit of New Belgrade, the questions which will many of Yugoslav architect try to answer during 1947. In political and professional circles there was a commitment and clear willing to start planning and construction of a new city, but there was no clear conception of strategies for achieving this goal. Only the basic idea of the city itself was clear: to become a capital of the Federation, the central city and seat of power of the new federal bureaucratic structures. The area of Bezanijsko polje, unusable before, due to its

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.71.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.72.

composition of wetlands, was planned as a colonized space for the Federation. The space in this way belongs to the state and its planning and construction is being financed from the top. As for the urban solution it has been completely opened to debate. As it was noted before, period in which Dobrovic was creating hadn't been the period of individual design, therefore his solution from 1946 was too limited in domain and supposed to be set at much wider basis.⁵²

With this goal at the end of 1946 tenders were issued for preliminary design of the Central Committee building of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Government Office. Tenders were published with the request that in addition to the conceptual design of buildings architects also give urban solution proposal for New Belgrade area. Regardless of the imprecise text of the tender and under-defined program, the program clearly expressed commitment that a new city should be formed as a capital of Federation. Parallel to this tender the tender for preliminary design of a representative hotel in New Belgrade has been published.⁵³

In the references of the tender text was written that Dobrovic's sketch should be used only an orientation. It should also be emphasized that plan has been changed drastically in competition proposals. Instead of Dobrovic's idea about railway junction and station the Federation Palace building was placed in the middle. This building represented the focus of the urban composition. In the final revision of the plan, Dobrovic's solution with a focus on rail junction was completely left out and "has become a blind spot of modern urbanism, which even at the beginning of a new century was the subject of debates." According to the plans created after the competition in 1947 the pattern of New Belgrade has emerged from a stringent hierarchic order. It seems that the main reference in this urban matrix was the Federation Palace buildings which construction started in 1948. It was built on the area where Dobrovic planned the future railway station. A year later, Nikola Dobrovic was forced to resign as main architect of Belgrade and accepted the position of full professor in the Faculty of Architecture.⁵⁴

After the completion the numerous project ideas were foundation for postwar Yugoslav architectural and urbanistic theory and practice. Essentially, the increasing role for architecture was augmented by the cancellation of private property that had been carried out shortly before, the state thus emerging as the sole financer of development—a situation in which the new city could be planned from scratch, as an expression of the new political-economic conditions.⁵⁵ The group of expert gave the first prize for the Federation Palace building to the Croat architects (Vladimir Potocnjak, Zlatko Neumann, Anton Ulrich, Dragica Perak and Branko Vasiljevic). The project of Slovenian architect Edvard Ravnikar, for the Central Committee Building, shared the second place with another team while the first prize had never been given. As for the

⁵² Ibid, pp.72-73.

⁵³ Ibid, pp.73-74.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.75.

⁵⁵ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , pp. 9-10

urbanistic solution the final decision has never been brought, it was built on these two dominant governmental and party buildings.⁵⁶

New Belgrade in planning

Socialist architecture versus new monumentality

The reorganization of the Urbanistic Institute of Belgrade was done after the ending of New Belgrade's competition in 1947. It was divided into the Planning Institute of Belgrade under the direction of chief architect and designer of New Belgrade Nikola Dobrovic and with Milorad Macura on the head of the architectural team. The Council has been formed for the construction of New Belgrade, which already sessioned in August and September of 1947 in Belgrade and Zagreb, and formed the main professional recommendations.⁵⁷ Edward Ravnika talks about the contest of these meetings and main ideological basis for planning and construction:

"We need to prepare everything so that New Belgrade becomes the starting point of Yugoslav architecture on new foundations... The position of New Belgrade is so undeniable ... it has all to become a new heart of Yugoslavia. The Council has already decided that already in general plan for this area clearly defines the character of this city as administrative, economic and cultural center and to enrich it by all means of technique and art and to determine it spatially. The area between the Danube and Sava Rivers, railway lines and new winter canal must first become a center of everything that has a federal significance in Yugoslavia, what would prevent that in this area would not be built mass housing or industry, even though these buildings in a smaller amount would not be excluded."⁵⁸

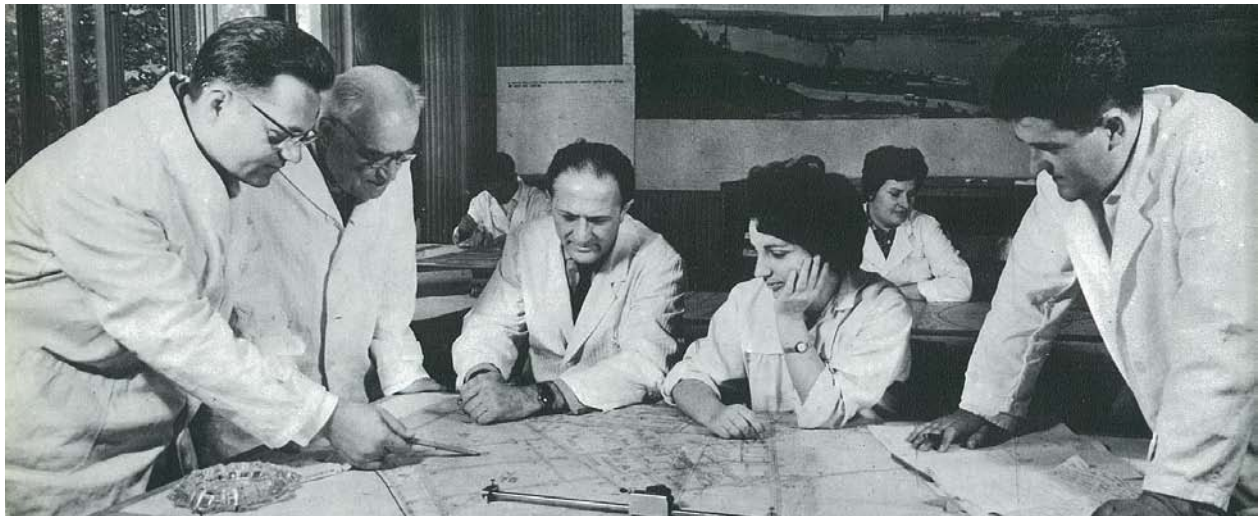


Fig. 3.5: New Belgrade in planning (New Belgrade 1961)

⁵⁶ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.75-82.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.105.

⁵⁸ Ravnika Edvard , *Veliki Grad [Great City]*, p.454.

In the conclusions of the Council, the only accepted element which came from the competition, was the Federation Palace building and its location on the Danube bank. The Council taught that the traffic should have been done clearly and consistently with the main route parallel to the Danube and the highway that would not represent the usual main street but would be a new type of traffic artery. The council recommends relocation of Dobrovic's railway junction and disagrees with Dobrovic's statement that one railway station is enough for Belgrade. The Council also discussed the construction of the canal between the Danube branch and Sava River, which would become winter home and traffic connection the light industries and river transportation. At the same time it would become the boundary between New Belgrade and Zemun. Despite this they also proposed relocating of the airport to the west of Bezanijska kosa, so that it could develop further on in the required area.⁵⁹

A plan submitted by **Edvard Ravnikar**, further illustrates the ambition to create a new and specific socialist expression in architecture. Ravnikar's plan is organized around a central axis gathering chief state complexes together with a series of open public spaces. As the plan's main compositional element, the axis had been carried further into New Belgrade's realization. It is important to mention that content of this plan is actually more driven by ideology than the first sketch by Dobrovic. While the linear organization of Ravnikar's plan is reminiscent of Le Corbusier's *La Ville Radieuse* from 1935, in his solution the entire scheme manifest in Le Corbusier's functional zoning of housing, work, leisure, and traffic is reinterpreted as a hierarchical 'zoning' of governmental facilities, focusing on the Central Committee tower as the centerpiece. This contradiction between the plan's form and content came from the inclusion in the design language of elements from both International style functionalism and Socialist realism eclectic formalism.⁶⁰

The political climate of the period contributed to these disparate architectural characteristics: with Tito and the rest of the state leadership pursuing political independence from both the Western and Eastern blocs in the late 1940s, a development that would culminate in a crisis in relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR in 1948, straightforward allegiance to either of the dominant Western or Eastern architectural paradigms would have been undesirable. Instead, a new model begun to emerge, mixing elements of both sides into a particularly Yugoslav form of what has been termed, however oxymoronically, 'socialist modernism' in architecture.⁶¹ About the main characteristics of this, new Yugoslav architecture style, Nenad Sevic writes:

"In the first place it is socialist. It means that it solves new requirements which come from general characteristics of socialism in Yugoslavia. Thus becomes an integral part of the overall struggle for the socialist construction of our country, a part of our economic and cultural policy. This fact gives our architecture the new social content and takes away narrow class character which it had until the revolution. Changing from private to public property it has been created the most significant domain for an architect... Urban planning as a science, which organizes the life of individual cities and

⁵⁹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.107.

⁶⁰ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , p. 10.

⁶¹ Ibid.

towns in the higher sense of socialist development (meaning in social, economic, transport, cultural and aesthetic terms) in our conditions becomes realistic and possible only after the liquidation of private property. This fact significant influence on forming our architecture and its socialist character, because urban planning includes wide lines and requests which must reflect on the formation of architecture...”⁶²

The same year, the demand for “socialist architecture” neither explicitly modern nor Soviet also surfaced in competitions for the main governmental buildings, with an emphasis on their representational and monumental character. It seems that in the case of New Belgrade, the pursuit of a new architectural monumentality unfolded without any awareness of similar efforts by Sigfried Gideon, Josep Lluís Sert, and others in the circles of CIAM at the time. In CIAM, debates over “new monumentality” were tied to a recognition that in the postwar city, architecture needed to develop new means for representing and constructing new urban centralities, meant to go beyond strict utilitarianism and regain lyrical value through an expressive synergy of artists, architects, and urban planners. In contrast, the Yugoslav architects were concerned with investigating the character of individual buildings by moving away from both historicist prewar architecture and Socialist Realism toward a monumentality of light and contemporary architectural means.⁶³

Here, it is obvious that in architectural practice of pre-war Yugoslavia existed the division of architecture on realistic, the one that is built, and one bold which is shown in competitions. Competition for the New Belgrade included a large number of Yugoslav architects and the assignment of this competition was to resolve that division. Because of that the winner of the competition for two most important buildings got the promise that he will elaborate the project.⁶⁴

New Belgrade in planning

Master Plan from 1950

Despite the lack of consensus over the concept from 1948 on the ground of Bezanijsko polje execution of utility work and construction of the first facilities begins: Palace of Federation, representative hotel, and the Student Pavilion at Tosin bunar. The work was suspended after two years because of political and economic crisis caused by rift with the Soviet Union.⁶⁵

In early 1950s when work on the field of New Belgrade had been suspended, questions about the plan remained open although in changed conditions. After the rejection of Dobrovic’s preliminary plan and his departure from the position of the main architect of Belgrade, the Institute for the studying and developing the problems of New Belgrade

⁶² Segvic Nenad (1950), *Stvaralacke komponente arhitekture FNRJ [Creative Components of Architecture in FPRY]*, Arhitektura, Zagreb, no.5-6, pp. 6-7.

⁶³ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City’s Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , pp. 10-11

⁶⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.89.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.122.

has been formed. The main idea was to live these issues in the hands of a team of experts. Change of the institutional framework has been directly connected with another parallel action - the process of de-individualization of authorship in the planning of New Belgrade.⁶⁶

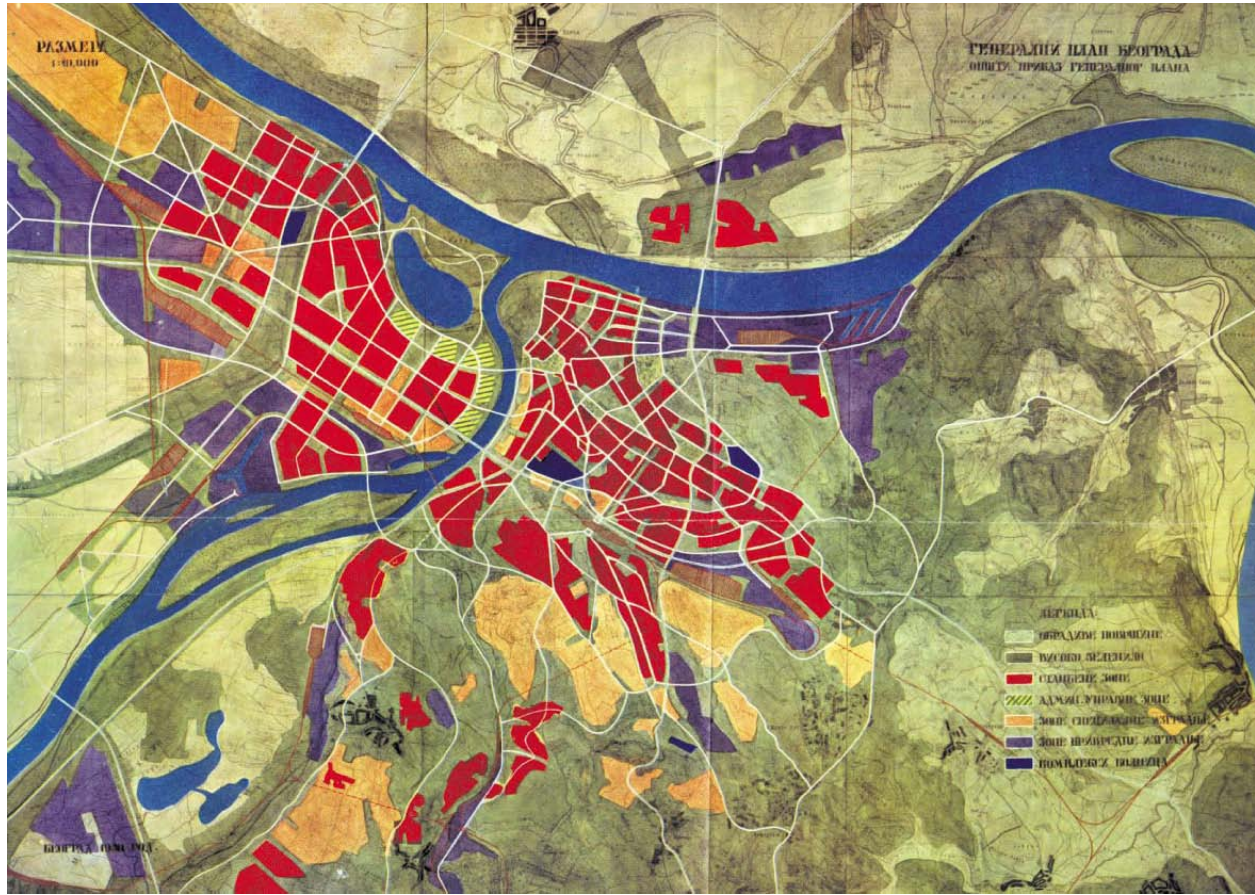


Fig. 3.6: The first post-war Belgrade Master Plan from 1950 (<http://www.urbel.com>)

On top of that, on **October 20, 1950** the first post-war **Belgrade Master Plan**, developed by the Planning Institute of Belgrade, was adopted. Even though the plan, has taken Nikola Dobrovic's ideas from 1948 as starting point, it was mainly based on the recommendations of Five Year Development Plan of City of Belgrade (1947-1951), analyzes of the current situation and future development programs of Belgrade until 1966 developed by the Planning Commission in cooperation with the Urban Planning Institute. The principle of individual authorship has been overcome thanks to this plan. It was not just the result of deviation from the physical planning, but was a result of different mechanisms of "socio-political planning", as well.⁶⁷ Milos Somborski, the new director of the Urban Planning Institute and executive chief of the plan, said that the main determinants of this plan are: expected growth of population of Great Belgrade to a million, expectation that this plan will give a general solution for all basic elements of

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.127.

⁶⁷ Ibid, pp.128-129.

city life, equal living conditions throughout the all city territory, construction of a new part of the town on the left bank of Sava River in order to place Belgrade as politically relevant, first-worthy and the administrative center of Yugoslavia and use of modern urban theories and practices that are acceptable and applicable in the given natural and social conditions. In the same article Somborski writes that the main purpose of the plan is implementation of a new social order in all aspects of life and urban consequential changes in character and urban Belgrade image. Belgrade's appearance and its organization will get a brand new character after the realization of Master plan.⁶⁸

The new modern city construction on the left bank of Sava River, i.e., realization of the New Belgrade as the main project of the Master Plan will have the biggest influence on the change of the Great Belgrade's look. The concept of New Belgrade as the capital of the Federation still remains one of the priorities of the plan.⁶⁹

The theoretical assumptions of modern urbanism were constantly adjusted to changes and administrative models of the socialistic system. The Yugoslav architects and city planners strongly believed that the principles of the Athens Charter and CIAM were able to be applied in the full meaning only in terms of socialism. In practice, and especially in the planning of New Belgrade, seeking solutions for the CIAM application principles in the given socio-political conditions has been present.⁷⁰

Solutions in Master Plan have been subordinated to the administrative organization of local government and the systematic division of the city on zones and residential areas (micro-region). These facts have had large influence on the formation of relevant planning proposals. Regional centers which operated as: administrative and political center, cultural center, center of trade and economic management, regional sport center and regional park had been planned. Residential areas are the basic organization units and besides residential buildings should include public facilities, such as: primary school, children's nurseries, kindergartens, children's playground, restaurant, library, medical clinic and pharmacy sector; supermarket, laundry facilities, gym, green area and garages. Given such an ambitious program of public facilities, the size of the settlement, according to study of Olivera Minic should be in range of 4000 to 6000 inhabitants and in special cases, up to 10 000. An ideological basis has been presented through an effort to reduce and, ultimately, remove differences between center and periphery.⁷¹

In the Master Plan, zone of New Belgrade has been divided with the main traffic routes into the four longitudinal areas. The costal one has been designed as an administrative area and the three others have had housing for the main function. A "zone of special construction" has been planned on transversal line between the Federation Place and

⁶⁸ Somborski Milos (1951), Problemi urbanistickog planiranja Beograda [*Planning problems of Belgrade*], Arhitektura, Zagreb, no. 1-4, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam* [*New Belgrade: Contested Modernism*], Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.129-130.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p.130.

⁷¹ Ibid, p.130.

future railway station. The Great War Island is connected with the coastline and the Danube River branch has been transformed into a lake.⁷²

Accepted Master Plan also brings revised plan of New Belgrade, designed by architect **Vido Vrbanić** and Institute for Studying and Developing Problems of New Belgrade.



Fig. 3.7: Revised plan of New Belgrade, elaborated within the Master Plan of Belgrade from 1950, led by architect Vido Vrbanić
(Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation)

⁷² Vrbanić Vido (1951), *Urbanistički plan Novog Beograda* [Urbanistic plan of New Belgrade], Arhitektura, Zagreb, no. 1-4, pp. 118-133.

As for the traffic solutions Vrbanic's plan is based on the orthogonal system with the main longitudinal lines in direction of Branko's bridge and new bridge in the direction of Nemanja's streets, as well as the main highway direction in center of New Belgrade. Rail traffic is based on already known relocation of the existing train station and railway junction in Sava amphitheater and tracing lines on a high embankment on the western edge of Bezanijsko polje and the station in New Belgrade opposed to the Federation Palace building.⁷³ Territory of New Belgrade is divided into strict mutually isolated areas - governmental and cultural institutions, housing, supplies and distribution, industry and recreation. Objects are treated individually according to the special characteristics of each zone. The zone of government and culture is situated in the middle of Bezanijsko polje between the Danube River quay and the main road, with the Federation Palace building as the major element of the composition.⁷⁴

Central Committee Tower, the highest building in New Belgrade, is located at the tip of Sava River and The Danube River in the monumental avenue with buildings of representative functions. Federation Assembly building is located on the banks of Sava River, between the two newly designed avenues, with its formal access alley and square. In the heart of the plan is a huge manifestation square bounded with closed blocks with free ground floor on the north side, and two tall towers in green on the south side. A monumental building of the Museum of Yugoslav art in form of ziggurat is located Between the Federation Palace and the railway station. On the other side of the square, is placed infrequent construction till the Sava's coast, where along with one smaller square buildings of the modern exhibition pavilion and galleries are situated.⁷⁵

Recreation zone includes green space around each block, and parks in the coastal zone and Bezanija, and recreational centers on War Island and Ada Ciganlija. Industrial zone is planned on the south side of the area between Sava River and Bezanijska kosa, directly related to the supply zone, which is located along Sava cargo port on the coast. Compensatory connection with the historical center of Belgrade has been planned through Sava amphitheater.⁷⁶

In relation to Dobrovic's Preliminary Plan, Vrbanic's plan cancels diagonal lines and, more importantly, with its rigid zoning completely ignores the concept of the urban landscape. While the previous plan concept has been determined by the dynamic composition, spatial and plastic, with equally importance of each individual object in the complex spatial relationships, in Vrbanic's plan matrix is determined in a clearly defined and mutually almost independent, longitudinal bands indicating the objects, which are determined according to a strict functional hierarchy.⁷⁷

⁷³ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.131.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Vrbanic Vido (1951), *Urbanisticki plan Novog Beograda [Urbanistic plan of New Belgrade]*, Arhitektura, Zagreb, no. 1-4, pp. 118-133.

⁷⁷ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.132.

Vrbancic's plan predicts strictly defined types of construction - a series of frontal tracts in the extension of Nemanjiceva Street and the system of free placed objects in the mega-blocks (500x650-750m) in the central zone, or in small apartment blocks (250x300m), which follow the geometry of the left bank of Sava River in the inland of railway station.⁷⁸

Housing zone is arranged by the edge in the three regions with 80 000 inhabitants each, with density of 300 inhabitants per hectare. Group of apartment blocks, from four to eight floors with services on the ground floor, has been designed in the system of freely set pavilions, parallel tracts in green (vegetation free area occupy around 65 - 70%, and total unbilled area of the blocks around 80%). The first realization in New Belgrade, which despite the ambitious vision, represented a new, socialist architecture for a long period of time, were the first apartment blocks, constructed according to the displayed Vrbancic's ideas.⁷⁹

New Belgrade in planning

Housing policy

Upon taking power in 1944, Tito began to place strict limitations on public property, in line with Marxist-Leninist theories. Already, by 1947, the federal assembly had approved laws on confiscation of property belonging to enemies of the state, nationalization of companies, and expropriation of property. Interestingly, no law limiting the possession of real estate was passed until 1958, at which time the federal assembly passed a law limiting one's real estate possessions to two apartments in most cases, and in some cases three apartments. The new regime endeavored from the very beginning to control real-estate ownership. The only who could produce, own and allocate the majority of all real-estate had been the State. It was the mechanism of destroying the power of the landlords. The idea was that state-owned construction companies would build the housing and sell it to state-owned firms and to the enormous state bureaucracy, that would then distribute it to their employees by means of a housing board. This would eliminate the problem of exploitation.⁸⁰

Housing policy implemented in the construction of New Belgrade, has been completely subordinate to the terms of social ownership under socialism and have had for a basic starting point an ideological assumption that the apartment is general social good, such as city green or infrastructure. In theory, the right to the general social good, and therefore to the apartment, was universally associated with the ideal of a fair distribution of the general social good. In legal terms, this means: "The right to housing is a fundamental legal institution, which provides a working man the essential conditions of life."⁸¹ The distribution of socially owned apartments is the ideal realized in practice,

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.132-133.

⁸⁰ Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, pp.7-8.

⁸¹ *Zaključci Prvog opstojugoslovenskog savetovanja o stambenoj izgradnji i stanovanju [Conclusions of the First Yugoslav Symposium about living and housing construction]*, Komuna, Beograd, no. 3 (1956), p. 5.

which is formulated as an ideal of free home for everyone. In the theory the principle of distribution follows the ideal of social justice.⁸²

People could still build a house if they chose to, but they had to build it themselves. People who already owned apartments were allowed to keep them. However, due to the endemic housing crisis, households with apartments judged to be “too large” saw entire sections of their apartments confiscated by decree and redistributed to other households.⁸³

During the long period of time this ideal, however, is shown as economically and technically unreachable, and also unsatisfactory from the standpoint of fair distribution. In implementation of a complex system of distribution theory, in practice the various internal interests are being profiled, working within the organization through which employees get apartments. They compromise the basic principles while at the same time, main sense and the way of distribution is not being essential questioned. In terms of market in socialism, in which housing construction and housing structure are result of the forming relationships in residential investment area, programming and distribution of socially owned apartments rather than the market price of the apartment, there is a disproportion of the nominal standard, or plan, and economic weakness and lack of technical and technological development of the civil industry. Additional burden in the process of achieving the standards of living bring megalomaniac centralization socially “important” functions in space, as a consequence of ideological mechanisms, as it was the case with the design plan of the central area of New Belgrade.⁸⁴

In the period we are talking about construction of apartments has been planned centralized, and residential structures were in accordance with a request to build as many apartments as possible and completely solve the housing problems. This imperative was particularly topical in Belgrade because of the rapid increase of the mechanical population growth and immigration of large numbers of people who become new residents of Belgrade. As a result, in the first ten post-war years, in Belgrade the standard of living has dropped significantly compared to the pre-war period. The population has increased by 160 000, which required the construction of about 35 000 new units without counting householders who had been living in shared apartments, with them this number was increased to 57 000 apartments needed to be built. However, until 1956 only about 14 500 were built. In mid 1950's, a private housing fund in Belgrade is still dominant (around 79%), while 89% of homes built in the postwar period were publicly owned. Structure of new housing was quite poor. The problem of the lack of small apartments, inherited from previous historical periods, has been mostly solved by building two-room apartments. Therefore, in the first ten post-war years, two-room apartments recorded the largest relative increase in construction, from 26% to 43%. Building one bedroom apartments and studio is held at around 46%, while the

⁸² Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.134.

⁸³ Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, pp.8.

⁸⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.134.

construction of larger dwellings decreased from 18% to 10%, mostly three-room, and very rarely, larger apartments.⁸⁵

Funds for housing construction have been formed from the so-called social accumulation and compulsory separation of the percentage of employees and gross income from the fund of common consumption, and later, and from bank loans, less frequently, personal participation of citizens. By the mid 1960s, funds for housing construction have been centralized in, so-called housing funds. By the mid-1950s, the State "Planning Authority" means the marshaled state authorities and the republics of the Federation, enterprises, and to a lesser extent, the city of Belgrade. Moving to the communal system source of funds remains the same, but the main social investor, instead of the Federation and the Republic, became the City of Belgrade, the Yugoslav National Army and the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs. In addition, a large number of apartments in New Belgrade were directly purchased as the budget authority and organization of the Federation, Republic, City or community organizations.⁸⁶

In the first period of housing construction in New Belgrade the basic organizational unit of every residential zone was "living micro region". Till the end of 1950s, the concept of planning and design of housing in New Belgrade had been changed and the basic unit of a planned urban city became "residential community". Despite the fact that the idea of a residential community was built on an earlier idea of "neighborhood unit" defined by Clarence A. Perry and later socialist and urban elaborations of this concept, in socialist Yugoslavia, the introduction of the residential communities is directly associated with the introduction of self-management system.⁸⁷

Residential community has been conceived as a community of people living in a neighborhood (a residential area or micro region), organized within the municipality to manage the common social activities which were improving social life in that neighborhood.⁸⁸ In new towns and the cities, residential community has been identified with the so-called local community. General Law on residential communities from 1958 established the basics of organization and development of local communities as territorial units and as a form of self-association of citizens. However, despite the legal basis and the general imperative to introduce a residential community as a basis for planning and design, its economic, social and spatial frameworks have remained largely unclear.⁸⁹

⁸⁵Ibid, pp.134-135.

⁸⁶Ibid, p.135.

⁸⁷Ibid, pp.135-136.

⁸⁸ *Nacrt opsteg zakona o stambenoj zajednici [Law on living community]*, Komuna, Beograd, no. 1 (1958), pp. 71-74.

⁸⁹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.136.

New Belgrade in materialization

Housing reality

“New houses, roads, parks will be placed here, and human life improved for a thousand years....From now on, this will be the heart that vigorously pumps life far into the north and deep into the south, the center of brotherly union of the Yugoslav peoples.” With these words, the Directorate for Construction of New Belgrade called attention to the city’s intensely promoted housing campaign at the opening of its publication ‘New Belgrade – New Town 1961.’⁹⁰



Fig. 3.8: New Belgrade in planning (New Belgrade 1961)

Construction of housing becomes an important priority and already in 1949 begins with building Students’ dormitory complex for 5000 students, and a housing buildings in Tosin bunar with around 3 000 flats, according to the defined density of 250 to 300 people per hectare, or 20 - 30% constructed area on the field. The buildings are built by the urban projects of the Institute, designed by Ljuba Ilic and Vida Vrbanica. Major construction has been done thanks to the youth work brigades.⁹¹

⁹⁰ *New Belgrade 1961* (Belgrade: Direction for Construction of Novi Beograd, 1961), p. 5. taken from Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*

⁹¹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.137-138.

On one side ambitious and unrealistic demands of Five Year Plan have dictated the construction. And on another, it has been held down by the poor conditions - poverty and lack of modern construction technology. The result of these conflicting factors in practice was suspending all urban and architectural inventiveness.

Construction of almost identical five-floor high pavilions on Tosin bunar has been created as a result of such conditions. Residential buildings are placed in the free system on equal distances with green open spaces in between. The main disadvantages of this settlement are uniformity and lack of identity in urban and architectural terms. Objects themselves are built according to uniform project of equal buildings, in classical system of structure brick walls without central heating installations. The basic type of a small apartment, which is repeated through the pavilions, has severe functional defects, such as interconnecting room with a bed in the middle of the flat or only one-sided orientation of all rooms.



Fig. 3.9: Pavilions on Tosin Bunar (New Belgrade 1961)

The final departure from such a design has been symposium in Dubrovnik in 1950. Criticisms of the collectivist spirit and uniformity of the first post-war housing settlement represented an official rejection of this model, which has made a significant incentive to creation and development of authorship architecture. In addition, when because of the economic crisis in 1950s construction of New Belgrade suddenly stoppe a possibility for its fundamental re-conceptualization was opened once again.⁹²

Among the first buildings in New Belgrade designed to “exude with cheerfulness that is light and airy”, were not housing building but a state representative hotel. This hotel had also been a subject of public competition for New Belgrade in 1947. It was planed as one of three main public building in the first phase of the concept. In the competition text stood that hotel was designed for high class guests coming in official visits to the state administration, as well as for temporary stay of important administrative functionaries of the Federation. According to the program it was a hotel with 50 double-bed apartments, 50 double-bed rooms and 100 single-bed rooms with separate bathrooms and toilets for each room.⁹³

In terms of the competition there was not given a definite location for the building, which left the possibility of choice to the designers. The hotel could be placed in the city center or on one of the river banks. First prize in the competition has been won by Design Institute of Croatia, i.e. architects Mladen Kauzlaric, Lavoslav Horvat and Kazimir Ostrogovic. This solution, as well as the other two award-winning solutions, was designed as modernistic buildings appropriate to the idea of modernistic city. All three solutions were also quite out of context placed in undefined landscape of New Belgrade as free objects in greenery. The accommodation facility is organized in a long six floor tract with simple parallelepiped geometry, in addition to the common set of functions on the ground floor and mezzanine.⁹⁴

The location of the hotel on the Danube River quay, next to the train station in Zemun, was decided already in Dobrovic's preliminary plan for New Belgrade from 1948. According to the first-award-winning solutions and projects developed by the Engineering Institute of Croatia, hotel construction already started in 1948. With the temporary break in construction of New Belgrade in 1949 the construction of the hotel also stopped, even thou reinforced concrete construction had been completed. Works were restored in 1960, according to revised project, which was developed by one of the first-award-winning solutions in the contest, the Croatian architect Lavoslav Horvat. The hotel was built in six years (1961-1967), and opened as a hotel “Yugoslavia” in 1969, when the interiors, designed by Belgrade's architects Ivana Antic, Mirko Jovanovic, Milorad Pantovic and others, were finished. When it was done, the hotel “Yugoslavia” was the largest and most modern hotel in the former Yugoslavia, with seven floors and ancillary buildings, 1 500 rooms, 1 100 beds divided into 200 single, 400 double rooms

⁹² Ibid, pp.139-140.

⁹³ Ibid, pp.140-141.

⁹⁴ Ibid, pp.141-142.

and 23 apartments, a restaurant with 600 seats and smaller restaurant with 200 seats, and with all following facilities.⁹⁵

Till the beginning of the seventh decade of the twentieth century, the first “settlers” in New Belgrade lived in the pavilions, barracks and dormitories on Tosin bunar, completely isolated from the historical center of Belgrade and oriented to the central functions of the historical center of Zemun. In this period of the break in the construction of New Belgrade, a wave of illegal construction started once again. The builders were bringing their families from the provinces and settled in the growing number of single-storey houses and huts.⁹⁶

With Resolution of Cominform-Bureau in June 1948 started a fracture in the political and, indirectly, economic relations with the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries. After the initial uncertainty which has been related with the outcome of the political crisis in mid 1949, and arrest and internment of thousands of people on Goli Otok, the final outcome becomes quite clear - the split with Stalin's policy that brings political as well as serious economical consequences. At the time of greatest crisis in the early fifties, New Belgrade has had only 8 000 inhabitants. The construction completely stopped, and under-stabilized soil, on which the construction the Palace of Federation had begun unbroken under the weight of concrete structures. Economic crisis has been followed by the doubts in the correctness of the idea and the concept of New Belgrade and a period of post-war enthusiasm has been replaced by the crisis of the six decade.⁹⁷

However, the new city was in many ways not living up to the vision that urban planners had encoded into the plans for New Belgrade. The illegal construction of huts and cottages, architecture for people who have a minimum of existence, becomes the only real, and for the poor and isolated society, appropriate content of the new town. “Idealized pattern of an open rug, an imagined landscape of the future seen by Dobrovic, in reality becomes an organic pattern of poverty, which is spreading over the center of a city.”⁹⁸

The state's inability to produce sufficient housing, compounded by the strict limits it placed on the production of housing by non-state actors, undermined the designs of the architects and planners. In the first place, it created a dire and constant housing shortage that drove people to squat in building spaces that were allocated to communal uses, sometimes even with the tacit or formal approval of the building authorities.⁹⁹ This was the case both on the micro-level, with the transformation of elevators, laundry rooms and other such spaces into homes, and on the macro-level, with the failure to provide shops, cultural spaces, day-care centers, and other such spaces. It is ironic, to

⁹⁵ Ibid, p.142.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p.142.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.143.

⁹⁸ Ibid, p.143-144.

⁹⁹ Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, pp.11.

say the least, that a socialist government would, through its policies, limit collective activities, forcing most them back into the private sphere.¹⁰⁰

Relating to New Belgrade apartment buildings in 1953 and 1954, it is possible to discern two distinct populations: employees of companies who had acquired apartments in these buildings and households whose land and home was expropriated, and who were offered an apartment in the pavilions as compensation.¹⁰¹

There were two main reasons for expropriating people: to free up land on which the state wanted to build and to eliminate what the state identified as “unhygienic settlements” – essentially, shanty towns of low quality housing with little or no infrastructure. Sometimes these two goals were combined. In a sense, then, the state’s distributive policy was acting to eliminate social inequality, by offering underprivileged people better quality homes.¹⁰²

This caused another big problem. The distributive mechanism adopted by the state also perpetuated certain existing inequalities. When the state expropriated land, it was required by law to offer people living on it a new home of equal or greater size and quality. But in many cases the given apartments were not appropriate for the large families who had been moved. Because inhabitants of Belgrade were unable to resolve their housing needs through official mechanisms, they resorted to building a home illegally, usually on the periphery of the city, on land set aside for other purposes.¹⁰³

Also in its efforts to ratchet up the production of housing, the state had little money left for other important items in the urban plans. Most notably, recreational and commercial spaces were conspicuously absent from the construction budget. As a result, people had to travel all the way to Belgrade to do their everyday shopping. Inhabitants of New Belgrade in the 1950s commonly brought up the absence of markets, bakeries, and newspaper stands at voter meetings, and newspaper articles throughout the 1950s and 1960s continued to deplore the lack of day care centers and cultural institutions, labeling New Belgrade a “dormitory city”.¹⁰⁴

Very few Local Centers (mesne zajednice) had been realized. These building were intended to be the heart of each neighborhood unit, combining the offices of social and political organizations and associations, schools, day cares, retail shops and services to satisfy day-to-day needs, and a cafeteria, all in one place, within walking distance. Without centers of local community there is only a mass of houses, a faceless, random section of an endless housing zone of a million inhabitants, and not a community of neighbors.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, pp.15.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, pp.16.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid, pp.18.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, pp.14.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, pp.14-15.

This problem was aggravated by shortages that were not directly related to housing policy, such as the penury of public transportation in New Belgrade. It would not be farfetched to speculate that the absence of essential services was one of the reasons people living in Belgrade's shanty towns were so reluctant to accept a brand new apartment in New Belgrade in the mid 1950s. This isolation continued to plague inhabitants of New Belgrade, as well as those of other new settlements in Belgrade, into the 1970s, and perhaps later.¹⁰⁶

The press, and especially *Beogradska Nedelja*, a weekly newspaper with a strong interest in social issues, played a role in disseminating sociologists' skepticism about settlements like New Belgrade. An article ostensibly on Vinko Jerzabek's 1967 reporting that inhabitants of New Belgrade who lived in towers were „like sky-scrapers – self-sufficient within their families“, „atomized“ households without any ties to their neighbors. They lived in New Belgrade as if in a hotel, only staying there to eat and sleep. The article singled out urban planners for blame while pointing at the larger responsibility of the state, noting that, „probably in the face of the inexorability of material conditions and the housing crisis, they gave up convincing the decision-makers that it is socially incorrect to build [settlements containing] only apartments“.¹⁰⁷

Criticizing urban planners from the first half of the twentieth century throughout the world, urban historian Milan Prelog took particular aim at current practitioners in Yugoslavia. Their problem, he claimed, was that they understood urbanization as being an activity directed at regulating the consequences of the growth of cities, rather than as the source of their growth. This „pathological“ urban growth was not merely a burden to city's infrastructure; it also destroyed the traditional values of urban life without replacing them with new ones. Prelog did not mention what these values might be, but he might have been referring to traditional urban spaces and social relationships, such as neighborly relations and local organizations. It should be emphasized that Prelog and Cosic were not only criticizing the implementation of urban planning. They were critiquing its fundamental premises and methods. Urban planners had failed, in their view, because they did not recognize that cities were part of the much larger system of the national economy. Urban growth simply could not be regulated at the municipal level – it had to be coordinated at the regional or national level.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, pp.14.

¹⁰⁷ Le Norman Brigitte (2008), *THE MODERNIST CITY RECONSIDERED: CHANGING ATTITUDES OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS AND URBAN DESIGNERS IN 1960s YUGOSLAVIA*, Tokovi Istorije 3-4/2008, p.149.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, pp.149-150.

New Belgrade in materialization

City of housing: unplanned destiny

When it was once again approached to the planning of New Belgrade in mid-1950, with the reorganization of public administration, large areas, previously reserved for the federal administrative center, changed use to housing. The Urban studies done in 1954. by **Stanko Mandić** preceded the planning process for New Belgrade. The study primarily examines the starting point of the Master Plan from 1950 and rejects its proposals for river regulation and formation of artificial lake, filling the entire surface of Bezanijsko polje and building blocks in the free system, with four floors.¹⁰⁹

On the contrary to Dobrović's plan key role of Mandić's study makes a proposal of concentrated building of high apartment blocks deployed at eleven locations dotted in the field of Bezanijska kosa. Based on comparative analysis of the factors in the density of development: Mandić comes to a prototype of a new housing block on the surface of the circle with a diameter of 300 m, with a total 10 000 people in four twenty-four storey residential buildings. Zone of family housing is planned in part of Tosin bunar and in the direction of the old Zemun. Business and trade part is concentrated in the area of a new railway station. Near the residential area and along the main streets are arranged bars, shops, offices and similar, while the zone of culture is set in coastal area.¹¹⁰

For the basic traffic lines Mandić's scheme provides: highways in the middle of the field, diagonally road which goes from Belgrade across the bridge in Branko's Street toward Zemun or new railway station, and diagonal road in the opposite direction - toward the bridge from Zemun to Belgrade, with subordinate connection to the station. Scheme is completed with cross-links to housing blocks situated in the radius of 300 m from the public transportation.¹¹¹

In 1955. Stanko Mandić resigned from the Planning Institute and neither participate in the farther development of the plan, nor had an impact on the further development of his concepts in the elaboration of the planning process. Only some elements of his urban studies were taken as a starting point for the work of the Master Plan of New Belgrade. His concept of building high-concentrated objects was supported in basics, but in the farther development of the plan solution for each block has been essentially completely transformed. The traffic scheme was also completely changed.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Blagojević Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.144-145.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p.145.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.146.

¹¹² Ibid, p.89.

The primary responsibility for **Master Plan of New Belgrade** which was finally adopted on **June 17, 1958** took **Branko Petricic**, the director of the Urban Institute from October 1955. Petricic was involved in the work on solving problems of New Belgrade for the first time in early postwar years, when he participated in the first competitions and got prizes for the Federation Palace building design in 1947 and Modern Art Gallery in 1948. In the area of New Belgrade between 1948-1951., he designed one of the first major urban areas - Student Park and Faculty of Forestry at Bezanijska Kosa, both never implemented.¹¹³

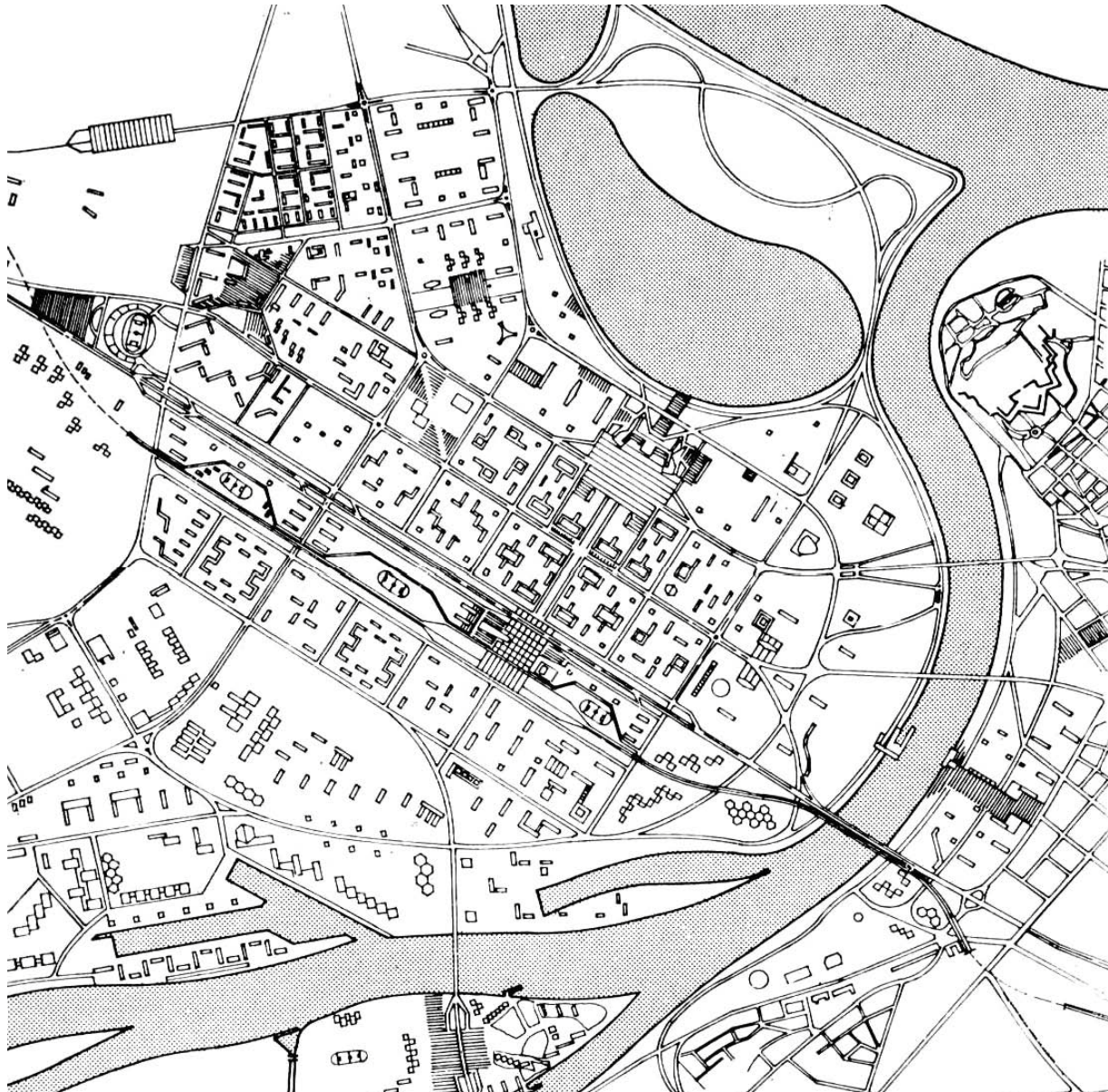


Fig. 3.10: Master Plan of New Belgrade, led by architect Branko Petricic
(Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation)

¹¹³ Ibid, p.146.

Until 1963, first as the author of Master Plan of New Belgrade, and then as designer of the housing blocks 1 and 2, Petricic develops the idea of modern city in landscape. However, this idea instead of following Dobrovic's previously formulated concept of the urban space in green, comes from the quite different references of Le Corbusier's Radiant city. Petricic's Master Plan of New Belgrade presents a reinterpretation of Le Corbusier's urban ideas, but with transformed initial concept and significantly reduced ideas which had to be adjusted to the conditions of real socialism and with the time change of twenty years.¹¹⁴

Pantovic's theoretical background of Master Plan for New Belgrade is exhibited in the study called "Factors density and structure of the city (with a project of New Belgrade)" from January 1957. In summary of this review was concluded that the principles of modern town planning had to be based precisely on the principles of Le Corbusier's Athens Charter. By analyzing the elements of construction, hereinafter of the "Distribution of population density and land use efficiency," Petricic underlines the benefits of construction of tall buildings, but also distances himself from the radical Le Corbusier's proposals.¹¹⁵

"Advantage of building cities under the system which consists high buildings, finally can be seen in the fact that additional spaces for urban greenery, parks and other free surface are being decreased, since an entire city is practically a park ... In our occasions the extremes of over 20 floors (skyscrapers) are not being in use, but the amount that remains on the human part, which will move within the limits of height between 8-12 floors ..."¹¹⁶

It is clear that with such an attitude Petricic completely rejects the earlier proposal of Stanko Mandic and access to a completely different organization of housing blocks. In general conclusions, the first item refers to the placement of buildings in the maximum capability of insulation. The following is the optimal population density for a medium-sized cities, about 350 people per hectare, but the density of housing for certain important biological, climatic and technical - economic factors, and that the ratio of housing density and building height is determined by local natural and technical - economic conditions, the conditioning of sociological and psychological factors.¹¹⁷

In the concluding chapter of work "Application of the influential factors in the project of New Belgrade," Petricic gives an explanation of the specific solutions and a detailed proposal sets of the main elements of the Master Plan. Only after the debate in professional and other forums, Petricic brings significant changes to the proposal and prepares a new plan, which will be adopted in the 1958.¹¹⁸

"Proposed Master Plan of New Belgrade" (1957), has as an essential element of the plan sets "settlement units" consisting of 8 to 12 floors height. It is planned as a unit

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p.148.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.148-149.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p.149-150.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p.150-151.

with supporting facilities for 5000 to 10,000 inhabitants, structurally and organically formed independently in nine blocks , size 400 x 400 m, in the middle of Bezanijsko polje. The blocks are placed at regular grid with the composition of the whole structure of Le Corbusier's meanders blocks. Dimensions of the blocks are also equivalent. In part to Zemun there are established three more blocks freely distributed. In the area behind the railway station are planned family housing blocks, in a series of free-form.¹¹⁹

It is clear that housing is, without any compromises, in this poor proposal for the Master Plan, the dominant feature of the central zone of New Belgrade and that central functions are placed in a logical correlation with the coastal and historical center of Belgrade.¹²⁰

The adopted Master Plan of New Belgrade from 1958, also signed by Branko Petricic, has a new, completely changed concept. In this one he again tries to answer the demand for better integration of functions. In the plan are again re-introduced manifestation square and administrative functions of the center of New Belgrade in the area between the Palace of Federation and railway station.¹²¹

New Belgrade in materialization

Experimental residential blocks

By the late 1950s Tito had somewhat relaxed the rules of housing production. Housing Associations (stambene zadruge), a type of cooperative through which individuals could group together and commission the construction of an apartment building, were introduced. The investor therefore became home-owners, but the state still had a monopoly on the production of real-estate for sale. It went a step further in this direction with the market-oriented reforms of the early 1960s, which mandated construction companies to produce apartments for sale "on the market" – although purchasers still depended on their employers for loans to buy these homes.¹²²

The purpose of these reforms was not to move towards a free market model, in which real- estate is a commodity that can be acquired and sold at a profit. Rather, the purpose of these reforms was to engage a greater share of people's personal savings, in order to speed up the production of housing, so that this basic social need could be satisfied. The state had not fundamentally altered its profound mistrust of private property.¹²³

Upon approval of the Master Plan of New Belgrade a huge campaign to build apartments in New Belgrade began once again. **Housing blocks 1 and 2**, with about 3 600 apartments and an area of 35 ha, are designated between 1958 and 1959 under

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p.150-151.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p.153.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, pp.8.

¹²³ Ibid, pp.8-9.

the terms of the adopted Master Plan of New Belgrade, and were materialized from 1959 to 1963. Authors for these blocks are Branko Petricic, Tihomir Ivanovic Dusan Milenkovic. The project was done by “Srbijaprojekt” in Belgrade.¹²⁴



Fig. 3.11: Model of housing block 1 (New Belgrade 1961)

Block 1 is in form basically a square of 400 x 400 m and block 2 is a trapezoid-shaped. Residential buildings are organized in two basic types: towers, which are designed as “vertical dominant”, and long two-tack buildings, conceived as “the main visual elements.” Services and other facilities are low, just in ground floor, and intended as “emphasizing visual elements”.¹²⁵ Due to poor capacity of the ground all the facilities were built in the system of the Institute for Materials Testing of Serbia (IMS), according to the structural engineers Branko Zezelj’s sistem, in structural grid of 4.20 m prefabricated pre-fabricated skeletal system of pre-stressed concrete.¹²⁶

Desig for housing Petricic based on the analysis of demographic data and statistics housing situation in Belgrade in the early sixth decade. After the war the city settled by massive young population what given the large mechanical population growth in Belgrade. The crisis of lack of housing has led to a mass phenomenon in public housing

¹²⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.155-156.

¹²⁵ Petricic, *Prve urbanisticke realizacije, Novi Beograd 1955-1975 [First materialized projects, New Belgrade 1955-1975]*, p. 228.

¹²⁶ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.156-157.

apartments in co-tenant relationship, where in 12 000 units were living close to 100 000 inhabitants. Since 1945, when the average of the floor area was 12 m² per inhabitant, in 1960 the index fell to 10.5 m². This means that in Belgrade more than 50% of apartments were smaller than 35m² in 1955.¹²⁷ Based on extensive analysis of statistical data, Petricic, Ivanovic and Milenkovic are in the design of flats in blocks 1 and 2, adopted the standard of 15m² per inhabitant. As the basic flat has been taken one in which live an average of three persons. Priority in the design and construction cost is obtained, compared to the traditional system of building. In blocks 1 and 2 applied to the five types of residential buildings with ten types of apartments:

- Residential towers, cross square shape, 23 x 23 m, GF +13 + L, architect Branko Petricic [two-room flats];
- Residential building, two-tracks length 63m (15 fields of construction range 4.20 m), GF +8 + L, architect Branko Petricic [one, two or three-room flats];
- Residential building, two-track length 84 m (20 fields of construction range 4.20 m), GF +8 + L, architect Branko Petricic [one, two or three-room flats];
- Residential building length 63 m (15 fields of construction range 4.20 m), GF +8 + L, architect Dusan Milenkovic [one, two or three-room flats];
- Residential building with three two-tracked units, P +8 + L, architect Tihomir Ivanovic [three-room flats and studio].¹²⁸

To achieve the efficiency stairs are installed in all buildings in the center tract, with 6-8 apartments per floor. Flats have a living room, bedroom, small kitchen and bathroom with shower of minimum size and with no natural ventilation and lighting. To avoid the monotony of typical buildings, Petricic varied exterior materials and color processing.¹²⁹

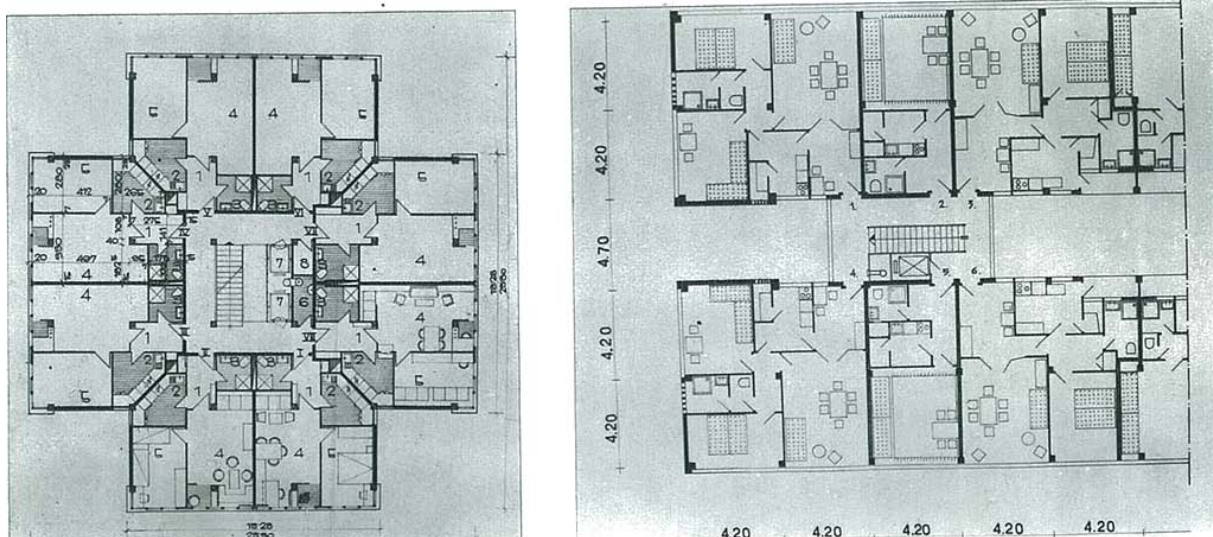


Fig. 3.12: Block 1, apartment units (New Belgrade 1961)

¹²⁷ Petricic, *Prve urbanisticke realizacije, Novi Beograd 1955-1975* [First materialized projects, New Belgrade 1955-1975], p. 224-226.

¹²⁸ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam* [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism], Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.157-158.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p.158.

In both types of long building, Petricic develops not only functional organization of an apartment, but achieves a convincing architectural expression of buildings as a whole. Two-tracked building provides all apartments with more light according to double orientation, and those positions on building corners even tree side one. In the type of residential building, designed by Tihomir Ivanovic, attempt has been made to break down the large unit into three separate two-tracked units, which would provide apartments, with a three-sided orientation.¹³⁰

Despite the efforts of architects to achieve cost-effective solution to typical buildings, and at the same time avoid the uniformity and monotony of buildings, they were severely criticized by experts. Petricic was aware of the criticism and insisted on the importance of integration and horticultural compositions of the block solution, which adds to the comfort and protection of free space blocks.¹³¹

Additional quality of urban and architectural character of the blocks 1 and 2, has been built with the local community center building "Fontana", which was built in period from 1963 to 1967, designed by Uros Martinovic. This object represented as Petricic said, the "an underlining artistic element". This was the first such a building in Yugoslavia, which, as Zoran Petrovic says "finally formulated the long-term study of spatial considerations of functional and organizational problems of local communities in general."¹³²

"Martinovic object, indeed, introduces a new dynamic in the urban landscape of apartment blocks 1 and 2, which is achieved by setting a triangular grid reinforced concrete structural skeleton and the consequent manipulation of complex geometry. In the urban setting and architectural objects have been achieved very successfully measured volume relations, especially relations between prominent horizontal level terrace and solid dosage forms that include one, relationship building, and it affected the public space and the logical consistency of the choice of materials in relation to volume crafted objects."¹³³

In addition to the successful architectural design, the facility has successfully achieved a clear and logical solution to a number of services such as: supermarket, dairy restaurants, stores and service shops, movie theaters with approximately 250 seats, galleries, youth club, library, etc.¹³⁴

Housing blocks 1 and 2 and the local community center "Fontana" confirmed that the design of New Belgrade have taken a new, much freer way character study of a new city. Urban free-solution set of objects in the green, which was a logical continuation of earlier research Branka Petricic, blocks from his studies in Master Plan of New Belgrade, is here brought to its ultimate consequences. In addition, in block 1 and 2 is

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Petrovic B Zoran, *Centar mesne zajednice u bloku 1 u Novom Beogradu [Local community center in Block 1 of New Belgrade]*, Arhitektura urbanizam, Beograd, no. 44 (1967), p.25.

¹³³ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.159.

¹³⁴ Ibid

the first time made an attempt to move from traditional to contemporary rational and economical type of construction, and the settlements and individual buildings. The industrialization of construction, which was conceived by the Institute for Materials Testing of Serbia and constructive solution of the system engineer Branko Zezelj represented a significant breakthrough study of engineering work and successful experiment in contemporary building practice.¹³⁵

The new apartment buildings from this period in general represented an improvement in the living standard of the average lower-class Yugoslav. The apartments were well lit and ventilated, equipped with modern appliances, and had running water and an integrated toilet. They were much more appealing than expensive rooms for rent in kitchens and basements located inside the city, or houses with wells and outhouses on the outskirts of the city.¹³⁶

New Belgrade in materialization

Integrated monumentality through non-housing projects

Monumental architecture of New Belgrade has never achieved its representative role as the capital seat of Federation, since there have been built only two planned projects from the basic plan, and with great delay.

The building of the **Federation Palace** began in 1948. It was designed by Vladimir Potocnjak and co-author Anton Ulrich, Zlatko Neumann and Dragica Perak according to the tender award-winning project. Still under construction, this building has become a major focus of the new city and a decisive factor in the planning of its central zone. The project was based on the organizational scheme in the form of letter "H" with two concave curved side blocks connected with a linked tract, which is in the center developed in an annex orientated to the park and The Danube River. Building tracts facing the street cover a spacious square, from which there is an access to the ceremonial entrance and lobby on the ground floor of the annex and, furthermore, monumental staircases to the upstairs annex, where they placed a large hall for the ceremony with showrooms, conference halls, and to the tract orientated toward the square, premises of the president and the first vice-president of the federal government.¹³⁷

In the first phase the project was led by the architect Vladimir Potocnjak. By the 1949 when the building stopped only reinforced concrete skeleton construction and the side blocks and partially the construction of the central part of the building were done. Re working on a project started in 1955 when a special federal commission decided that the original project has to be changed and adapt to new requirements. Given the fact that in the meantime Potocnjak died, the project has been passed to the bureau

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Le Norman Brigitte (2006), *Paradise Spurned: housing policy and the limits of utopian planning in Belgrade, 1950-1967*, Conference of the European Association for Urban History Stockholm, p.159.

¹³⁷ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.160-161.

“Stadium” in Belgrade. The building was built and opened for the first conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in September 1961. It was finally designed according to the revised project of the architect Mihailo Jankovic. Only reinforced skeleton of a higher part of the building was taken from the old project, while the central annex was demolished. The official central part, all annexes around the building, the interior layout, the entire interior and the façade were done according to the new project.¹³⁸



Fig. 3.13: The Federation Palace, project leaded by the architect Vladimir Potocnjak (New Belgrade 1961)

It is important to notice that the integration of urban and architectural thinking, which marked the period we are talking about, makes the Federation Palace building unique object in the architecture of Belgrade. The concept of this building came from the idea of a new urban city, and the building itself has become one of the most powerful generators of the concept of urban development of New Belgrade. If we look into the projects developed by Potocnjak's team, we will see that the initial architectural concept set in the proposed urban plan of New Belgrade, was crucial for the both monumental and representative buildings - the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the

¹³⁸ Ibid, pp.162-163.

Presidency of the Yugoslav Government. The authors, however, in the competition proposal of the urban plan of the Presidency of the government haven't used given location. Instead of that they placed the building in the center of the future New Belgrade, while building of the Communist Party Central Committee was located in the confluence of the Sava River into the Danube accordance to the Competition Regulation. Once the Cabinet building has been torn from the context of the competition plan solutions and implemented into the new one in which it received a unique urban significance any possibility of further multiplication of its architectural concept become disabled. In the new urban context, the architectural form of the object of the Federation Palace begun to affect the wider urban way of thinking about New Belgrade and becomes a key of its solid urban hierarchy.¹³⁹

The Federation Palace building is one of the first fully-defined elements of New Belgrade in the Master Plan of Belgrade from 1950. Its massive presence in the empty landscape of the central zone of New Belgrade has been for a long time the key framework for the concept of a plan for this part of New Belgrade, and then in the plan from 1960 it became the main generator for the whole concept of the central zone. It can also be seen as one of, as Aldo Rossi defines it, the primary elements of the city, which has, above all, permanency, and strength to affect on slowing down or speeding up the urban process with its unique spirit and character.¹⁴⁰

Judging by the impact that the Federation Palace building had on the forming of the major axis of the plan, so that the disposition of the building and blocks reflects a strict hierarchy order of the control center - city center - housing, it seems that the crucial redefinition of the morphological structure of the central area of New Belgrade has been taken on the basis of a canonical solution of the power of these one building.¹⁴¹

Based on what we have stated, we could conclude that the strength of the building the Federation Palace lies in the fact that it has been created as a reflection on the ideas and concepts of the new town, but at the same time, these building had a big influence on the realization of the specific solutions of the modern city of New Belgrade.¹⁴²

In the period when the work on the project of **Central Committee Tower** was stopped, the original location and the solution, given in the first post-war competition, were abandoned as well. The building was built in 1965, according to another winning project from 1960. The building of the Central Committee was until the 1980s the highest building in New Belgrade. With its strong form of simple, pure parallelepiped covered with aluminum and glass facade, and dominant position on the approach to New Belgrade, this object indeed represented "the strongest sign of our socialist era," as it was envisioned in the basic ideological setting of the first competition.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Ibid, p.166.

¹⁴⁰ Rossi Aldo (1982), *The Architecture of the City*, Cambridge, Mass:MIT Press by Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, p.166.

¹⁴¹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.166-167.

¹⁴² Ibid, p.167.

¹⁴³ Segvic Nenad (1950), *Stvaralacke komponente arhitekture FNRJ [Creative Components of Architecture in FPRY]*, Arhitektura, Zagreb, no.5-6, p. 34.

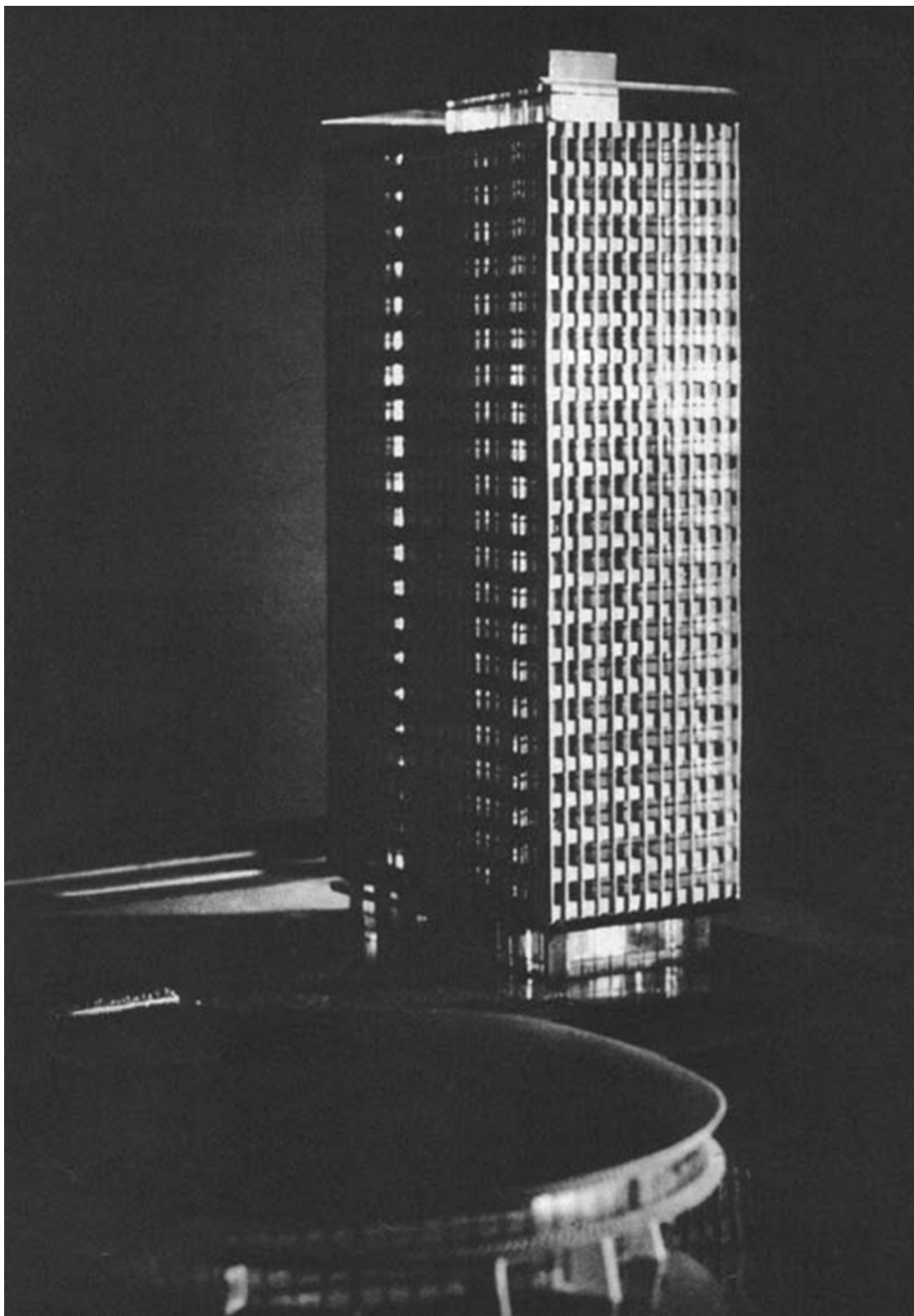


Fig. 3.14: The Central Committee Building, model of materialized project by architects Mihailo Jankovic, Dusan Milenkovic and Mirjana Marijanovic (New Belgrade 1961)

Instead of the location on the tip of the confluence of two Belgrade rivers, which was originally planned, the building “which has a height of about 100 m and 24 floors, urban is set to represent the opening theme to the complex of New Belgrade on arrival from the old part of town, and makes the shaft vision from several streets of Belgrade.”¹⁴⁴

Authors of the project, architects Mihailo Jankovic, Dusan Milenkovic and Mirjana Marijanovic imagined and designed the composition as a tall tower with low circular base annex. The tower is, according to architects, designed “as a very small office building with office space for studio work, as well as rooms for meetings and conferences,” while in the annex should be placed plenary hall with 600 seats, with a special gallery for the press, lodge ceremony for guests, diplomats, and with about 200 seats for spectators and all the necessary halls and lounges. The annex, however, hasn’t been built.¹⁴⁵

The construction of the Central Committee Tower has been done by engineer Milan Krstic. The tower is vertically divided into two parts, by its function. On the lower five floors are situated youth committees and the general department of Serbia. On the ground floor with separate entrance, are located lobby and basement beneath. Underneath the tower is located garage for 50 vehicles and technical facilities, which are placed outside the tower area. The total usable area of the entire facility amounts about 23 70m².¹⁴⁶

The construction of the tower is based on a combination of a central reinforced concrete core and reinforced concrete columns (dimensions 20/50 cm), a modular range of 1.80 m at the longer side of the building, and 1.90 m in the shorter, which with the horizontal primary and secondary beams make some sort of skeletal system. The ground floor of the tower is differentiated from the main body by the first floor edge columns which are reinforced with a powerful concrete beam (200/165 cm), which carries its load on the ground floor columns (dimensions 60 x 120 cm), with a span of 5:40 m. The roof terrace on the twenty-fourth floor is designed with a concrete canopy. In the central core of the towers are located central hallway with a staircase and elevators, fire stairs, installation cables and sanitary facilities.¹⁴⁷

In form and materialization of the facade, as Ranko Trbojevic analyzed it in 1967, the building façade is apparently the closest to the classical façade of curtain wall type. Here, however, is only a visual impression, not a real development of aluminum glazed façade system.¹⁴⁸

In a new critique of the ideological grounding of the building, Vladimir Kulic claims that its architecture is expressed in definite trend “... in light of efforts to Yugoslavia, whose

¹⁴⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.168.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. p.168.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p.169.

economy experiences the accelerated development in early sixties, catch up with the world using the “own resource” and to demonstrate and follow the latest architectural trends, “and that this ambition, because of the underdevelopment of technology of steel structures, achieved “the absurd price massacre” of the concrete construction. Kulic concludes that it is all a result of his aspiration to realize the similarity with the structures of the developed West, which had just then, he says, turned into symbols of corporate capitalism.¹⁴⁹

The weakness of this solution can be found in the discrepancy between the aspirations of architects to follow contemporary trends and conditions of realization of modern architecture of this period. In terms of lack of development and the consequent inability of the construction industry here is not a comprehensive solution based on modern industrial production of precise and fast installation of the steel skeleton construction and curtain wall, but the solution is achieved seemingly modern facility, which is Construction took nearly five years.¹⁵⁰

Functional city

In the period after World War II, a majority of the projects of reconstruction or construction of new cities in the world was the urban ideology represented by the CIAM and its fourth congress in Athens, which is explicated in the publication Le Corbusier's Athens Charter (1943). The basis of the Athens Charter, in addition to the concept of the Radiant city - the city of sun, space and greenery, as an essential element, built CIAM's concept of a functioning city, according to which the functions of the city are reduced to basic activities - housing, work, recreation and transportation. In addition to many projects of new settlements, this model is largely applied in the specific organizational schemes of two new major cities: Le Corbusier's Master Plan of Chandigarh of 1950 and Lucio Costa's plan of Brasilia in 1957. We should, also, mention that the CIAM's and Le Corbusier's doctrines, even though slightly modified, have been used in the planning of New Belgrade. Settings of the concept of functionalistic city and CIAM influences were not homogeneous and unambiguous, but conflicted in different contexts and periods.¹⁵¹

Translation of the Athens Charter to Serbian language was published in 1965 by the Club of young architects of the Faculty of Architecture, in period when New Belgrade was already set as a vision. In the introduction for the book Nikola Dobrovic writes: “After all, the planning skills are today so much advanced, in the merits of the Athens Charter, as well as other works of CIAM. Cities like Brasilia, Chandigarh, New Belgrade, Velenje, university towns like Baghdad, Mexico, Cancun, etc., as well as the reconstruction of so many devastated places eloquently confirms that. These are all results of the Athens Charter.”¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p.170.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.171.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, pp.174-175.

¹⁵² Dobrovic Nikola, *Rec o knjizi [About the book]*, in Le Corbusier, Athens Charter, p.10.

Publishing council and the editorial board consisted of third-generation modernist architects, who are all graduates in post-war period. Its decision to translate and publish this book as the first one in edition called "The documentation of contemporary architecture" means, as Dobrovic sad, that they declare themselves as supporters of the Athens Charter.¹⁵³

Planning of New Belgrade remains firmly committed to the Le Corbusier's doctrine despite the turning period of the discourse of the modern movement and a final break with Athens Charter and hard postulates of functionalistic concept in 1950s. Petricic reinterpretation of Radiant city in Master Plan of New Belgrade, hasn't just shown all the unacceptable of the basic model, but with its positivism it has opened the way to already overcame issues of symbolism and monumentality.¹⁵⁴

In the introvert planning process of New Belgrade dominant is model of zoning and functional hierarchy. Petricic's concept of New Belgrade falls right in its poor housing setting, on the solution of "settlement units" which supposed to be its greatest strength. The greatest disadvantage of this scheme is the fact that the through housing solution hasn't been carried out the integration of different needs -functions and spatial and social relations.¹⁵⁵

Although the final Master Plan of New Belgrade made an attempt for reintroduction of the central axis from the Federation Palace to the train station, this line showed the entire disintegration of the plan. When in the planning of New Belgrade in the sixth decade hasn't been done a fundamental re-conceptualization of the functions in instead of integration occurs the segregation, even the opposition center versus housing. This thesis is best illustrated by the plan for central zone of New Belgrade from 1960, which represents the last "big" urban concept of New Belgrade, that will in the long period of time be the basis for other urban planning decisions, and which started the massive construction.¹⁵⁶

New Belgrade in planning

Central zone treatment

The concept of the Master Plan of New Belgrade was exceeded the same year when it was officially adopted. The initial idea of "settlement units" is carried out only in solutions for housing blocks 1 and 2. During the adoption of Master Plan in March 1958 Petricic left the Institute for Urban Planning. For a new director of the Institute was chosen former president of the Society of Architects of Serbia, Aleksandar Djordjevic. He will remain in that position until 1974. Announcing the change in strategy, Djordjevic noted that "instantly during the discussion about the Master Plan of New Belgrade was observed that there are some intractable issues in the field of design and organization

¹⁵³ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.175.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p.178.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

of life in the new part of town” and because of that already in the period of plan adoption, it was recommended that some important parts of the city would be designed by the public competitions.¹⁵⁷

Competition for the first residential block in the central part of New Belgrade held in 1958-1959 beside the detailed urban and architectural design of a block of 10 000 inhabitants at the beginning of Lenin Boulevard (Block 21), included the requirement to make preliminary proposals for the urban development of the whole central zone of New Belgrade (the building sector from the Federation Palace to the train station). Nobody has won the first prize. Two equal prizes were given to the teams of architects: (1) Leonid Lenarcic, Milosav Mitic, Ivan Petrovic and Michael Canak, and (2) Josip Svoboda, Dusan Milenkovic, Milutin Glavicki, Gabriel and John Lukic Drakulic. Creating a plan is entrusted to the City Planning Institute, which has formed a special working group, made from the winner authors.¹⁵⁸

In the process of program restructuring and formation of working groups of the Urban Institute, it is ignored the solution proposed by Ratomir Bogojevic, which was awarded out of the competition. In Bogojevic's work, however, in an innovative manner discussed relevant issues of the spirit and character of the new town, and even greater paradox is that only in this design theoretically and practically a relationship between space and time was considered, and offered unorthodox and straightforward solution, in the spirit of modern urban simplified review of functionalist dogma.¹⁵⁹

In an effort to treat the basic problem of modern urbanism, that “adverse effect on people” who live in modern settlements, highly organized plan on paper¹⁶⁰, does not require Bogojevic lessons of traditional urbanism, but uses modern means and a real invention non-orthodox even experimental urban system. His work, therefore, can be seen as the formulation of critical concepts, problematize, and then change the setting inflexible functional city. In further elaboration of the central zone that followed the announcement, it is overlooked these, perhaps the most important message from Bogojevic's work, that in the modern planning must be explore new ways of integration of needs and functions, which are beyond a model of functional hierarchy.¹⁶¹

The plan of the central zone of New Belgrade developed in **1960** by the Working Group of the Urban Institute - Leonid Lenarcic, Milutin Glavicki, Milosav Mitic, Dusan Milenkovic and Uros Martinovic, is the final outcome of a long process of planning, which sets out the main features of the character of the center zone of New Belgrade in the spirit of a functioning city. Based on this decision Milutin Glavicki and Uros Martinovic, with their group from the Urban Planning Institute, have developed in **1962** **The Regulation Plann of New Belgrade**, which served as the basis for the detailed development of some individual parts until the 1980s, when with the building of housing

¹⁵⁷ Djordjevic Aleksandar, *Urbanisticko resenje centralnog dela Novog Beograda [Urbanistic solution for the New Belgrade central zone]*, Arhitektura Urbanizam, Beograd, no. 2 (1960), p.3.

¹⁵⁸ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.179-180.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p.180.

¹⁶⁰ Bogojevic Ratomir, *Novi Beograd [New Belgrade]*, Arhitektura Urbanizam, Beograd, no. 24 (1963), p.32.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.181.

block 24 (by architects Bogdan and Vlada Slavica, 1984-1989) in the blocks on the line between the Federation Palace and train station, was finally canceled the idea of forming the center of the monumental area of New Belgrade.¹⁶²

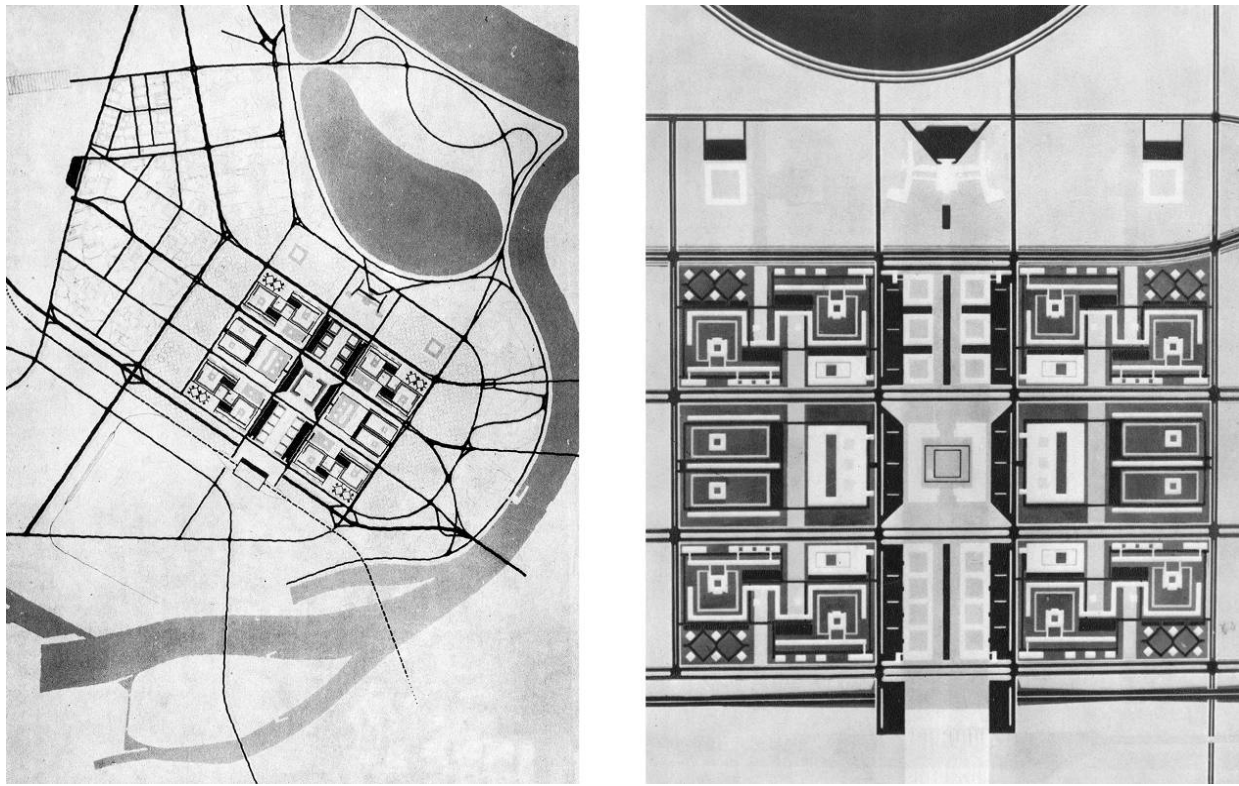


Fig. 3.15: Uros Martinovic, Milutin Glavicki, Milosav Mitić, Leonid Lenarčič, and Dusan Milenkovic, Plan of New Belgrade Central Zone, 1960
(Blagovevic Ljiljana, *Back to the future of New Belgrade: functional past of the modern city*)

The plan of the central zone included the territory along the axis from the Federation Palace to the train station with roughly square shape of 1600x1600m. The main change to the settings of Master Plan (1958) and the solution from the competition is a relocation of the railway station 300 m in the south east direction. With this solution the central zone got bigger depth and could be arranged in three longitudinal areas. The central axis has been planned as a center of the general-city significance and was solved in three blocks with a square base, dimensions 400 x 400 m, in which, in addition to the central content, were incorporated three large square: a solemn manifestation square in front of the Federation Palace, the central square and the railway station square. These line was organized as a pedestrian promenade crossed with longitudinal cut roads, for which remodeling and engaging below the pedestrian prospectus architect Branislav Jovin did a number of sketches in the 1962. The composition of the panorama of the city marked the twelve benchmark high towers - commercial skyscrapers along the central axis on the angular positions. Symmetrically on both sides of the central axis lays three rectangular block with base of 600 x 400m. They are

¹⁶² Ibid, p.183.

planned as large residential blocks, with 10 000 inhabitants (blocks 21, 23, 28 and 30), in which ending positions is planned a group of high residential towers, which represented additional strong architectural benchmarks throughout the central zone, and two smaller quadratic housing blocks (blocks 22 and 29), in the middle zone, which include the complimentary facilities of the central city square. The plan implies a completely symmetrical composition of the blocks, but it is stressed that each of them will be, in the further elaboration, treated individually.¹⁶³

Specially Indicative for the understanding the plan of the central zone is a description of the solution for the central axis by Alexander Djordjevic: According to the content and form the authors tried to create broad but humane, joyful, lively and useful environments... Three large squares, different in function, blend together in this big move ...and explained the character of manifestation square, that is the formal area, which can serve as a place to maintain parade, events, meetings and large gatherings in days of national holidays.¹⁶⁴ Manifestation square is here treated as a ceremonial area, in front of the Federation Palace, which will not be activated spontaneously, but only for organized gatherings. This is a public space which usage is under constant supervision in the way that the manifestation organizations are under the supervision of the state government. This square is completely devoid of any possibility of being profiled as a free political space and unable to be in the given constellation plan, developed into a living urban area, an essentially the entire central zone of New Belgrade has the same character.¹⁶⁵

New Belgrade in materialization

The socialist housing standards

Over the next fifteen years, till the mid-1960, a new town got its first outlines, however, fully split (completely different) with the original plan. The main reason for this is administrative decentralization and reorganization of the Federation, therefore it has been dropped out from the construction of a large number of ministry buildings and from the concept of New Belgrade as a capital city.¹⁶⁶ Under these circumstances, New Belgrade was approached anew, freed of much of the ballast of state representation and with clear intent to construct a socialist city – in particular through housing.¹⁶⁷

With construction of a new part of the town on territory of Bezanijsko polje there has been set the new direction of growth of the historical city center and a dynamic relationship between the two previously independent areas has been introduced: Belgrade and Zemun. According to its position and concept, the main potential of New

¹⁶³ Ibid, pp.184-185.

¹⁶⁴ Djordjevic Aleksandar, *Urbanisticko resenje centralnog dela Novog Beograda [Urbanistic solution for the New Belgrade central zone]*, Arhitektura Urbanizam, Beograd, no. 2 (1960), p.5.

¹⁶⁵ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.180.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p.122.

¹⁶⁷ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , pp. 14

Belgrade was its central location.¹⁶⁸ But crucially, this conceptual change revealed an underlying paradox: transferring the symbolic value of a capital city's space onto a considerably less significant housing program.¹⁶⁹

New Belgrade was instead defined as a multifunctional urban center representing, "in a spontaneous and unpretentious way, the general rise of Yugoslavia and its capital city."¹⁷⁰ For its part the historical city center at Terazije was considered equivalent in rank, but architecturally outdated and too small for the needs of the growing metropolis.¹⁷¹ Within this conception of a metropolitan center, housing was, as suggested, granted a central symbolic and political role. By the late 1950s, through passage of various laws on limitation of private property, the state had become the principal actor in housing construction and distribution—a potentially risky role that would be endorsed chiefly by New Belgrade's example. Here, housing was not meant to be perceived as "idyllic neighborhood units, or dormitories, but (as) part of a vibrant, metropolitan center."¹⁷²

The urban plan of the local community - a residential community for 10 000 people, or housing **block 21**, was the first detailed plan through which were applied the basic elements of the composition of the planned central zone of New Belgrade, and its first realized segment. Detailed urban plan of the block 21, was made in 1960, parallel with a preliminary design of the central zone, and in the same engineering and design team - Working Group of the Urban Institute, by architects Martinovic (head of the team), Glavicki, Lenaric, Milenkovic and Mitic. Residential buildings were designed in three types according to the compositional requirements set in the preliminary plan of the central zone, and later in the accepted regulatory plan of New Belgrade. End corner of the block, which matches with one of the four points of the square, measuring 1.6 x 1.6 km of the central zone, is highlighted by a group of residential towers - the sixteen-elevated skyscrapers. The center line is emphasized with high skyscraper (Gf +24 + L), designed for single homes and business spaces, which hadn't been done. Inside the block are residential buildings with four floors height, combined with the low schools' and children's institutions' buildings. Towers are compositionally connected with the long ten-story buildings, which follow the boulevard. Block is filled with green space and pedestrian passage.¹⁷³

Urban solution is based on the intention to establish a balance between the different characters of the urban spaces on the left and right sides of the Bulevar Lenjina (today Mihaila Pupina). The contrast of a large un-built area in greenery with monumental buildings of the Federation Palace and the Central Committee set on one side, and high-density residential buildings structure located on the other side (the final block

¹⁶⁸ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.127.

¹⁶⁹ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , pp. 14

¹⁷⁰ *Novi Beograd 1961* (Belgrade: Direction for Construction of Novi Beograd, 1961), p. 16.

¹⁷¹ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished , pp. 14

¹⁷² *Novi Beograd 1961* (Belgrade: Direction for Construction of Novi Beograd, 1961), p. 16.

¹⁷³ Glavicki Milutin, *Detaljni urbanisticki plan Mesne zajednice u bloku 28 [Detailed Regulation Plan of Local comunitie in block 28]*, Arhitektura urbanizam, Beograd, no. 41-42 (1966), pp. 27-56. by Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, pp.185-186.

gross density is 21 416 inhabitants / ha, and net 540 inhabitants / ha), in urban way is solved by placing a very strong moves of reduced cubic forms of long housing, and with emphasizing vertical skyscrapers volume in the corner position. Urban solution was a decisive factor in the setting of architectural concepts of the objects, in which was emphasized the effect of the whole building as an element of great urban composition, with the expression of individual units reduced to minimum. Architectural design has been created by several design teams.¹⁷⁴

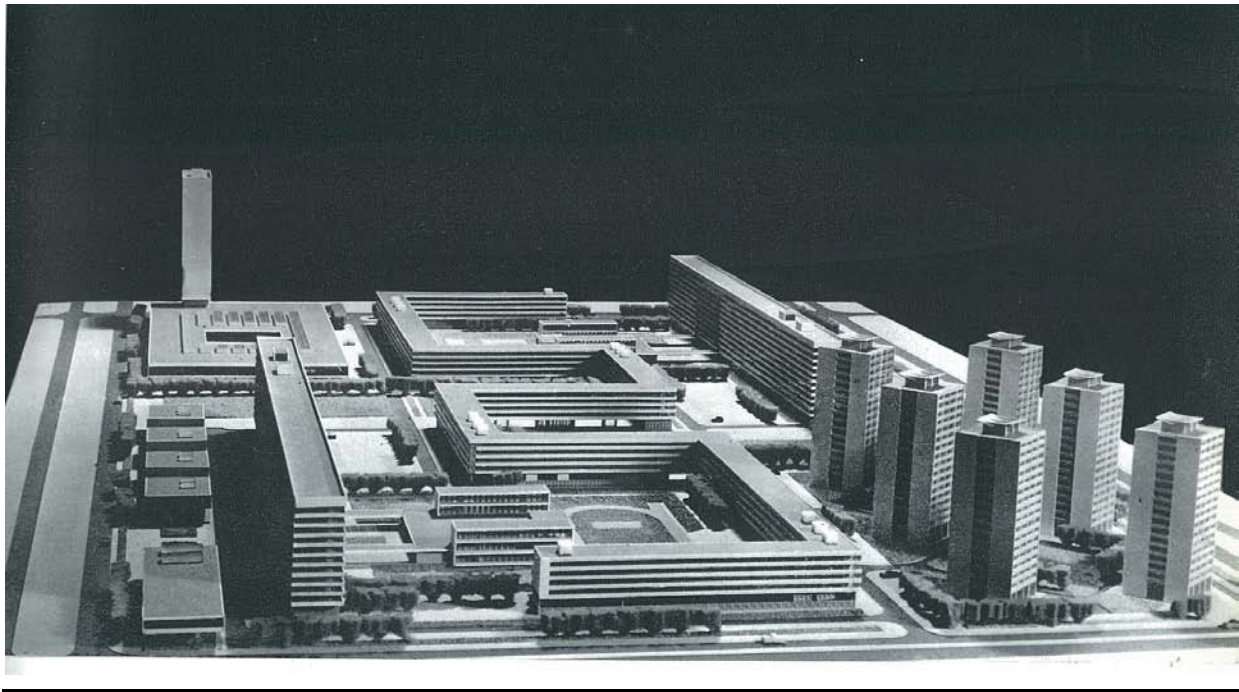


Fig. 3.16: Model of the block 21, by architects Martinovic, Glavicki, Lenarcic, Milenkovic and Mitic (New Belgrade 1961)

Construction of the block 21 started with the building of a group of six skyscrapers in the spring of 1962, and was completed in 1966. Considering the fact they were built for the Yugoslav National Army, the objects of the block 21 have been designed according to regulatory regulations of YNA.¹⁷⁵ With the restriction of the size of the apartment and the size of individual rooms, considering their function, it is specifically ordered to avoid locations which were designed to have shops in the ground floor, and it is further prohibited to place facilities for public use in the housing buildings, such as cafes, clinics and so on. Considering the facts that the locals could disturb residents, apartment buildings were reduced to housing function only with the minimum of the facilities required by the technical demands of the urban conditions. The only significant additional functions in the blocks were the school and children's institution.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, pp.186-189.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p.188.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, pp.188-189.

Even though it represented the central part of New Belgrade, Block 21 has been left without any seriously developed central city functions for a long period of time. In the apartment structure the biggest number of the flats had two rooms (44%) and three rooms (33%) which lead to the equalization of the social structure of the population.¹⁷⁷

The main elements of architectural expression in block 21, which is establishes a correlation with the principles of the modern movement: the skeletal system and directly connected partially free ground and the effect of “floating” of the main corpus of the building; and expressed horizontality in the primary plastics, which is potentiated with the rhythm of the withdrawn and emphasized horizontal parapets at frontal positions; complete standardization of the cubic facade elements; uncompromisingly clear cubical articulation of the façade elements; rhythm “full-empty” and “light-dark” in the processing of plastic facade; the ending roof terrace as the final “wreath” of the building, and others. In block 21, was made an attempt to rationalize building to the maximum and re-interpret the structure of the production line, but concept itself is linked to the modernistic methods of the third and fourth decade. In the reality of the under-developed construction industry and the imperative of building too modest, ordinary, and even substandard apartments, the realizations have just confirmed all problems of the housing construction system.¹⁷⁸

When Block 21 was completed in the mid-60s, once again were questioned the characters of the central zone and its special position in regard to the other parts of New Belgrade, and other new housing settlements built on the periphery of Belgrade. Social structure in New Belgrade, as shown in the sociological research of Ksenija Petovar, was very homogeneous with a dominant employment in the no manual sectors. Population structure was further “enhanced” with employees in the state and party administration, institutions and business associations and banks. Petovar, however, shows that, despite the efforts to directly influence on the formation of a representative, or so cold “elite” blocks in the central zone, due to the market conditions and resistance to moving to New Belgrade, this goal has never been achieved.¹⁷⁹

As an example Petovar states housing block 28, which detailed master plan was adopted in the 1965 (designer Milutin Glavicki and associate Branislav Jovin). Considering the attractiveness of the location of the housing block 28 in the planned central zone of New Belgrade, the investor, JINGRAP Business Association, has planned around 300 large apartments (120 m²) in the “de lux” category of processing.¹⁸⁰ When the apartments were on the market, it has appeared that there are not enough interested buyers for large apartments, so the investor was forced to change the structure of the apartments and offers a larger number of smaller units. The number of the large apartments has been reduced to a tenth of the originally planned,

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, pp.189-190.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p.191.

¹⁷⁹ Petovar Ksenija (1976), *Sociolosko istrazivanje uslova zivota u stambenoj zajednici u Novom Beogradu [Living conditions in housing community of New Belgrade]*, PhD theses

¹⁸⁰ *Novi Beograd- bloku 28: Detaljni urbanisticki plan [New Belgrade- block 28: Detailed Regulation Plan]*, Arhitektura urbanizam, Beograd, Poslovno udruzenje JINGRAP (1968), pp. 25-26. by Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, pp.192-193.

and the number of two-bedroom apartments, with 364 designed in the first, has been increased to 836 build.¹⁸¹

In the conclusion of the analysis Petovar says that the “three bedroom apartment is near the upper limit of the size of the apartment”, which most of the companies in Belgrade can afford for its employees, and more importantly, “the working organizations that can buy bigger flats for their workers, have, in addition to the financial resources, more socially influence to obtain the location in the central part of the old town or one of its most attractive peripheral zone“. So, despite the severe financial and ideological investments in the building of a new city, the intent of the planners of the New Belgrade to equalize or even surpass the historical part of Belgrade thanks to its urban significances has never been achieved. This further indicates the possible reasons why any trade, business, or cultural facilities haven't been built in this area in a long period of time. Center of New Belgrade remained empty field surrounded by apartment blocks with equal social structure of the new city population, inhabited in the modest two-room apartments, without jobs nearby and therefore without the social and economic potential and without significant central functions. A pattern of the central zone plan has survived only as an empty echo of physical determinism of the planning strategies, and by filling in the plan with the realized housing blocks city has never been created.¹⁸²

..... missing

¹⁸¹ Blagojevic Ljiljana (2007), *Novi Beograd: osporeni modernizam [New Belgrade: Contested Modernism]*, Beograd: Zavod za udzbenike, Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada, Arhitektonski fakultet, p.192-193.

¹⁸² Ibid, p.193.

Chapter 4:

Belgrade in post socialistic transition during 1990s

Historical facts¹

At the beginning of 1990s during the Socialistic Party leadership the amount of Yugoslavian territory has been reduced. Many historical events completely changed the geopolitical picture of Europe with significant consequences on the development of the Republic of Serbia and its capital.

The end of block division and **collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989** marked at the same time the beginning of the democratization of Eastern Europe and a new foreign policy of U.S. and the West toward Eastern Europe and the SFRY (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). The collapse of the Eastern political system did not, however, represent the end of the same political system in Yugoslavia. The world's political landscape has fundamentally changed the balance of power in the world politics and the balance of power within Yugoslavia, jeopardizing the survival of the communist political system of Yugoslavia. American and Western politicians have demanded a change of political system in Yugoslavia and the transition to democracy. The disappearance of the Eastern political systems and demands for changes in Yugoslavia has led to divisions and, unexpectedly, the survival of Yugoslavia as a whole was in question. In 1989 conditions for the division of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the country founded in 1943 which consisted of: Serbia (with two autonomous regions- Kosovo and Metohija, and Vojvodina), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Montenegro) were made.

In summer and autumn of 1988 on a wave of discontent caused by the Albanian separatism in Kosovo, Slobodan Milosevic as a leader of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia gathers Serbs and becomes a charismatic national leader. In May 1989 he became the elected president of the Presidency of the Republic of Serbia. In January 1990 on 14th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the Serbian delegation, headed by Slobodan Milosevic, sought to abolish the Constitution of 1974. Later, in these all occasions in June 1991. Slovenia and Croatia decided to cut all ties with other republics and become an independent state. Serbs from Croatia did not want to leave Yugoslavia and the Croatian police and paramilitary forces attacked the provinces with Serb majority and the war was imminent. Republic of Macedonia followed Slovenia and Croatia in September 1991. Bosnia and Herzegovina in March 1992. Federal Republics Serbia and Montenegro were against the independence of these republics. The war was fought first in Slovenia, then in Croatia (1991-1995) and finally in Bosnia and Herzegovina. **Operation "Oluja"** (Storm), which started in August 1995 ended the war in Croatia. The forces of the Croatian Army and Croatian police established control over western part of self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina. During the operation a mass exodus of the Serbian people took place. Endless lines of

¹ Guskova, J. (2003) *Istorija jugoslovenske krize 1990-2000 [History of Yugoslav Crisis (1990-2000)]*. Beograd

people could be seen on the roads to Serbia. Operation Storm caused an estimated 200,000-250,000 Serbs to flee for Republic of Srpska and Serbia. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was ended by the **Dayton peace** on November 21, 1995. On 27 April 1992 Serbia and Montenegro formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In December 1992 federal parliamentary and presidential elections were held and Slobodan Milosevic, as a representative of the Serbian Socialist Party, wins the first round and his party wins parliamentary elections.



Fig. 4.1: War in Bosnia- Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, commandants of Serbian army and arrested for war criminal by the Tribune in Hag (<http://www.rsplaneta.com>)



Fig. 4.2: Operation "Oluja"- Exodus of Serbs (<http://www.rtv.rs>)



Fig. 4.3: Slobodan Milosevic- Dayton Agreement (<http://www.britannica.com>)

In November 1996 Milosevic lost the elections. Not reconciling with the defeat, he began the campaign of falsifying the election results and faces a massive and permanent demonstrations.

Armed actions of the Albanian separatist groups and counter strikes of Serbian police and army in Kosovo culminated in the 1998. The international community requires the commencement of unconditional dialogue with international mediation, which Milosevic refused. The citizens supported this decision on the referendum. After some additional pressure and negotiations with Milosevic the agreement was reached, Serbian forces moved from Kosovo and international observation mission in Kosovo was established. In early March 1999 at **Rambouillet**, the Serbian delegation rejected the offered **agreement** on the status of Kosovo. Rejection caused the destruction of Serbia in **NATO bombing**, which began on 24 March 1999 and lasted until 10 June 1999. Serbia has suffered great destruction, primarily in industrial and infrastructure facilities and loss of lives. With **Agreement in Kumanovo**, the Serbian army and police withdrew from Kosovo and on this part of the republic was introduced in the international administration in accordance with **UN Security Council Resolution 1244**.

During this long ten years period of time, Belgrade became home to 100,000 refugees expelled from other parts of Yugoslavia. It also became home to a small class of urban “entrepreneurs” who owed their sudden rise to wealth to their political connections and the thriving grey economy. Also, Belgrade gained the dubious distinction of being the only European capital to be bombed at the end of the 20th century. The charred ruins of public buildings destroyed by NATO-hits during the spring of 1999 in fact are still present in the city center.²

Blocked transition and post socialistic transformation

The abrupt collapse of Eastern European socialism brought about the more gradual, post-1990 decomposition of the spatial characteristics of the socialist city. The literature points to several factors behind this urban transition: economic, institutional, social, and cultural. The first and most important factor is the economic, the rebirth of the land and property market following state policies of restitution and privatization. Market pressures lead to major land-use realignment as higher-intensity uses (e.g., commercial) move in to displace lower-intensity uses (e.g., residential), and as large industrial plants close down. The end of state control over urban land and real estate parallels the abrupt withdrawal of state agents from the production of housing. The private firms that take the lead in building the post socialistic city are typically small, fragmented, and capital-poor, although the situation varies from country to country based on the levels of development. This reversal of roles between the public and the private sector translates into a major shift in built forms. Large ceremonial civic projects like the Romanian People’s Palace and Victory Boulevard, or the East German Alexanderplatz and Karl Marx Allee are no longer built. Mass, large-scale residential construction ceases and most new housing assumes a fragmented form as either individual homes or small multifamily dwellings.³

In social terms, privatization and the end of state control over prices lead to rapid class stratification and the formation of an impoverished mass as well as a small group of *nouveau riche*. The lifting of travel barriers and the new cultural openness leads, at least initially, to a fascination with all things Western, from pop music to architecture, and a rejection of the socialist cultural legacy. The latter translates into an overarching decline of the very idea of a benevolent public realm) and the weakening of urban planning controls. It also brings about a new generation of builders who rebuff modernist functionalism and collectivism, assert a radical aesthetic individualism, and import eclectic styles. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the lavish homes of the *nouveau riche*.⁴

Belgrade is a quintessential example of a city with these post socialistic characteristics, a city that has undergone dramatic socio-spatial changes since 1990s. Once one of the

² Hirt Sonia and Petrovic Mina (2010), *THE GATES OF BELGRADE: SAFETY, PRIVACY, AND NEW HOUSING PATTERNS IN THE POST-COMMUNIST CITY*, Problems of Post-Communism, Volume 57, Number 5 / September-October 2010, p. 4

³ Hirt Sonia (2008), *LANDSCAPES OF POSTMODERNITY: CHANGES IN THE BUILT FABRIC OF BELGRADE AND SOFIA SINCE THE END OF SOCIALISM*, Urban Geography, 2008, 29, 8, pp. 785–810.

⁴ Ibid.

most prosperous and cosmopolitan urban centers in Central-East Europe, Belgrade deteriorated visibly as a result of the severe economic crisis, the wars, and the international sanctions that defined the tumultuous 1990s in Serbia and Yugoslavia.

In the 1990s, erasure from the city of capital-functions and hence of any formalized urban representation was a manifestation of the state's breakup and transitional shifts. This erasure process was caused by, among other things, the reduction and rearrangement of the state apparatus following the country's shrinking, the diminishing of markets for companies, the wholesale privatization of state property, unfinished legislation, a lack of funding for institutions previously dependent on the state budget, and, not least of all, the politics and strategies of forgetting applied to the socialist past.⁵

Between 1991 and 1994 Serbia's GDP fell by 60%, the hyperinflation of 1992-93 turned out to be the second highest ever recorded in world history, unemployment reached a quarter of the population, and the country was subject to strict international sanctions. Social stratification grew dramatically: between 1993 and 2000, the Gini coefficient measuring income inequality rose from 0.176 to 0.308.⁶

The chaos that defined Belgrade during the transition has been accompanied by a sharp increase in urban crime. In the mid-1990s, reported crime in Belgrade was 29% higher than in 1990, although it has decreased since then. The deep and widespread mistrust of the police and the judicial system, which led to unwillingness to report crime, is present. Nationwide surveys implemented about the same time also showed high levels of mistrust of public institutions, varying from 57% (mistrust of the police and the judiciary) to 65% (mistrust of the state government).⁷

Transition in Serbia was considered as being blocked since 1990. Most social analysts think that transition in this country had begun to take place after the end of Milosevic's rule at the end of the year 2000. As we already saw on the example of privatization of housing units in spite of this blockade, there were some institutionally and non-institutionally generated activities in favor of privatization, which have contributed to the real post-socialist transformation of the Serbian society in the nineties. The key sign of the post-socialist transformation has been the formation of a new important transformational social force in Serbian society, namely, the formation of entrepreneurs and of the strata of private owners⁸ which is crucial in understanding of urban transformation in Belgrade in this period.

Blocked transition in the first place means that there have been no comprehensive privatizations of the former state/ "social"/ firms. Also, there has been an initial phase of "ownership transformation" in Serbia, initiated by several federal laws enacted in the

⁵ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished publication, p. 25.

⁶ See Milena Jovkovic, Miroslav Zdravkovic and Radmila Mitrovic, 2002, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: *Trade Potential and Comparative Advantages*. (<http://www.wiiw.ac.at/balkan/files/Jovacic+Zdravkovic+Dragutinovic.pdf>). According to the United Nations Human Development Index 2007-2008, the latest available Gini coefficient for Serbia is 0.30, showing no improvement since 2000.

⁷ See Eric Grody, 2004, "Serbia after Djindjic: War Crimes, Organized Crime, and Trust in Public Institutions", *Problems of Post-communism* 51, no.3, pp. 101-107.

⁸ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, *Review of Sociology* Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27-49.

1989–90 period.⁹ The initial approach of the federal lawmakers at that time was to make employees in former “self-management” organizations as individual “shareholders” in their firms, to motivate them for a more efficient use of capital and all resources at their disposal. According to the available data¹⁰ by the end of 1992 some 33% of “social” enterprises completed the process of ownership transformation¹¹ and legally these organizations were functioning as “share-holding companies”. However, only part of the formerly “socially owned capital” went nominally in the hands of employees. State banks and other “social firms” had their shares in such companies, and sometime, some outsiders, private owners, became shareholders. 33% of the assessed value of the formerly “socially owned means” has been transferred, by law, to the Development Fund, to be used for solving pressing social problems of the unemployed, retired people and for some other social needs. In those “transformed” firms some 43% of total values of former “socially owned capital” legally existed now as “capital of shareholders”. According to the available data, some additional 30% of all “social enterprises”¹² have started some activities directed toward their “ownership transformation” in the period 1990–1992. Even though there are no reliable data on subsequent “transformational” activities in those non-transformed firms, from the data on firms pending for privatization in the “post-October 2000” period, one could assess that in the second half of the nineties there was no significant “ownership transformation” of the former “self-managed” firms in Serbia.¹³

Former “public companies”, controlled during the years of “self-management” more directly than other “social firms” by the state, (federal state, state of republic, city governments, or governments of specific municipalities), became (after 1989) *public companies in the state property*. These were firms in important businesses in energy production and distribution, public transportation, utilities, media, health, education. According to the available estimates¹⁴ some 44% of the assessed value of the formerly “socially owned capital” has become *state property* in this first phase of “ownership transformation”.¹⁵

Here, it is also necessary to mention that in the summer of 1994 the Serbian parliament enacted a so-called “**Law on revaluation**” of the sold “socially owned means” in the 1990–1994 period, with the idea to prevent unjust property gains by shareholders because of the effects of the inflation in this period, especially of the hyperinflation in 1992–1994. This measure of retroactive valuation of already transferred capital in the hands of individual shareholders resulted in a de facto return of the “privatized” capital of the “socially owned capital”.¹⁶ According to the available estimates¹⁷ 97% of the

⁹ Zec M, Boslco M. and Savic N. (1994): *Privatizacija [Privatization]*, Beograd, p. 208.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Laws, which were enacted during the rule of “socialists” were not titled as “Laws on privatization”, but as “Laws on ownership transformation”. The first law aimed at privatization to be named ‘law on privatization’ has been the 2001 Law, prepared and enacted after the regime change in October 2000.

¹² According to the Law on Enterprises, enacted in 1989, the former “self-managed organizations” were legally renamed as “social enterprises” if their assets were still “socially owned”.

¹³ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, Review of Sociology Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27–49.

¹⁴ Zec M, Boslco M. and Savic N. (1994): *Privatizacija [Privatization]*, Beograd, pp. 241

¹⁵ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, Review of Sociology Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27–49.

¹⁶ Ibid.

“privatized” capital has been renamed as “socially owned”, and only 3% remained in the hands of shareholders.

In the second half of the nineties, especially in 1997, a new **Law on ownership transformation** was enacted by the Serbian parliament, with the idea to increase some incentives (in the form of free shares) to employees in the still non-transformed firms to start privatization. There were also more strict deadlines determined by the Law to end the process of “transformation”. By the end of the year 2000, only a minor number of firms started transformation in shareholding companies in accordance with this Law.¹⁸

The “legitimacy crisis” of urban planning

The new regime was largely indifferent to urban issues. One of the few policy overhauls that were undertaken was the **Law on Housing** from 1992, which led to a mass privatization of housing units throughout the country. At first, the measure was only partly successful, until the period of political-economic collapse in 1993 and 1994 and the events remembered as ‘**the greatest hyperinflation in history**’ diminished prices to the point where near-total privatization became possible.¹⁹ By the end of 1993, the percentage of privately owned dwellings in Belgrade skyrocketed to 95%. By most accounts, members of the political elite gained easy access to the largest and most desirable units designated for sale. This was part of a package of strategies by which communist elites converted their political capital into economic capital.²⁰



Fig. 4.4: Hyperinflation in 1993 (<http://shaputalica.wordpress.com>)

¹⁷ Zec, M. and Zivkovic, B. (1997): *Tranzicija*. [Transition] Beograd

¹⁸ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, Review of Sociology Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27–49.

¹⁹ Petrovic M (2001), *Post-socialist housing policy transformation in Yugoslavia and Belgrade*. European Journal of. Housing Policy 1(2), p. 222.

²⁰ Hirt Sonia and Petrovic Mina (2009), An NCEEER Working Paper: *THE GATES OF BELGRADE: SAFETY, PRIVACY, AND NEW HOUSING PATTERNS IN THE POST-COMMUNIST CITY*, pp. 6 <http://www.nceeer.org/>

Simultaneously, the public sector slashed funding for housing maintenance. It also largely withdrew from housing production, thus bringing an end to the decades-long era of large collectivist residential buildings constructed under government auspices and destined for public ownership. The number of individual housing grew from about 35% in 1990 to about 75% in 2000.²¹ The initiative in city-building was passed to the fast-burgeoning²² but highly fragmented and cash-poor private construction sector.²³

The “legitimacy crisis” of urban planning during the 1990s has been reported across the whole post-communist world. As a result, illegal construction became widespread in many countries. Serbia is one of the most extreme examples. Here public policy regarding urban issues was put on the back burner to the point that its basic legal instrument—the building permit—came to be viewed as an optional piece of paper by wide segments of the Serbian population.²⁴

The cumulative effects of these developments were generally negative, at least for the large majority of Belgrade’s citizenry. To begin with, the number of dwelling units produced per year decreased dramatically (e.g., even in 2003, after Serbia’s relative stabilization, new housing production per year was only one-half of production in 1990). Housing quality also deteriorated. For the first time in many years, Belgrade experienced serious issues with lack of affordability, overcrowding and homelessness, all of which were exacerbated by the entry of the war refugees. A boom in the construction of officially unsanctioned, self-built residences served as a partial solution to the problem. In 1997, the number of illegally built dwelling units matched those built legally, thus converting urban informality into a new norm both socially and spatially.²⁵

As it was mentioned before Belgrade’s authorities had also tolerated limited amount of self-built housing during the communist era. Such housing was generally located on the urban fringe and was constructed mostly by rural residents of modest means aiming to gain access to urban jobs and services—a phenomenon common in many developing countries. This time, however, illegal housing became a strategy of the new entrepreneurs, including some members of Milosevic’s circle, to usurp urban green space and infrastructure. These neighborhoods, where everything (from houses to streets) was built without building permits, are currently in the process of post-factum legalization.²⁶

²¹ Petrovic, “Post-socialist Housing Policy”; Vujovic and Petrovic, “Belgrade’s Post-socialist Evolution”; and Mirosljub Hadjic, 2002, “Rethinking Privatization in Serbia”, *Eastern European Economics* 40, no. 6: 6-23.

²² *Between 1990 and 2000 the number of construction firms more than quadrupled: from 470 to 2411 (Institute for Informatics and Statistics, 2005, Statistical Yearbook of Belgrade, p. 189).*

²³ *The majority of private construction firms, especially during the 1990s, were very small, with less than 10 employees, and lacked the capacity to erect larger housing projects (Sasha Tsenkova, Country Profiles).*

²⁴ See Zorica Nedovic-Budic, 2001, “Adjustment of Planning Practice to the New Eastern and Central European context”, *Journal of the American Planning Association* 67, no.1, 38-52; and Sonia Hirt, 2005, “Planning the Post-communist City: Experiences from Sofia”, *International Planning Studies* 10, no. 3/4., pp. 219-240.

²⁵ Hirt Sonia and Petrovic Mina (2009), An NCEEER Working Paper: *THE GATES OF BELGRADE: SAFETY, PRIVACY, AND NEW HOUSING PATTERNS IN THE POST-COMMUNIST CITY*, p. 7

<http://www.nceeer.org/>

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 7-8

It is surprising that, despite the sweeping privatization, New Belgrade's population has remained relatively stable over the years, with a large share of highly educated people, the elderly, and original residents.²⁷ One of the reasons for this urban stability may be that socialist housing policies did not encourage middle class movement toward the suburbs – an atypical situation when compared to the severe decline in public housing in the West in the 1970s and 1980s - complexes such as the Grand Ensembles in Paris and Bijlmeer near Amsterdam. From the 1990s onward, the circumstances at work in an escalating housing crisis – a housing shortage, soaring prices, and growing economic and legal insecurity - also contributed to the stability of the local population and communities, hence to preservation, to an extent, of New Belgrade's collective housing model. Ironically, this urban quality has become one of the main sources of the keen development focus on New Belgrade in the post-socialist years.²⁸

Consequences of the socio-political changes to the urban city transformation of New Belgrade

With the Yugoslav breakup, seven national capitals have emerged in the Balkans, but unlike those cities with fresh capital status, benefiting from the opportunities offered by decentralization and a pursuit of individual distinction, Belgrade has been faced with a problem of shrinkage and loss of geopolitical and economic influence; it now holds the relatively humble status of Serbian capital in a regional economic framework. Seems unpredictable how this reduced role will affect its economy, population, and culture. But it is obvious that the phenomenon of erasure of physical spaces and experiences linked with Belgrade's capital-function, and thus of tangible forms of civic engagement with a range of institutions during the 1990s has been exacerbated by the loss of Belgrade's strategic role.²⁹

To an unaccustomed eye, nothing about the blocks would have looked different in the 1990s, except perhaps for regular signs of age. But the smuggled commerce grouped destitutely along boulevards and tramlines, emerged as metaphors of the city's political, economic, and social collapse. The chaotic blend of the grey economy, legal breakdown, political opportunism, and so forth was kept in balance through social entropy.

New Belgrade's physical form was hardly altered through informal action; rather, volatile influences had been adapted solely through the changing forms of occupation of the city's physical body. New Belgrade's unfinished network of public amenities was overhauled: functions of now evacuated local centers resurfaced in informal spaces, common rooms, or apartments; kiosk clusters sprang up at the foot of the apartment blocks, with offers extending from real-estate agencies and dental offices to gyms and fortunetellers.³⁰

²⁷ Ksenija Petovar, 'Istrazivanje o kvalitetu stanovanja u blokovima 45 i 70 u Novom Beogradu, source lost, pp.1-2.

²⁸ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished publication, p. 39.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 26.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 38.



Fig. 4.5: Illegal construction on New Belgrade (<http://www.trojka.rs>)



Fig. 4.6: Gypsy settlements (<http://www.flickr.com>)

Perhaps the most radical conversion of the blocks was sparked by the growth of the area's Chinese population, starting in the mid 1990s under the Milosevic administration's lenient regulations. Lured by agencies promising a comfortable existence abroad, up to 30,000 Chinese immigrants arrived in Belgrade hoping to support families back home. Chinese families continue to run shops in block 70, where they have reclaimed a redundant shopping center. Some feel content; many others are anxious about their insecure legal status and fear criminality. Native inhabitants of Belgrade sometimes lament what they perceive as a loss of erstwhile order and yet are pleased by their weekend visits to the center and the city's new multicultural flair.³¹



Fig. 4.7: Chinese immigrants (<http://www.politika.rs>)

Parallel with the wild growth and new inappropriate urban forms started a ruination of Belgrade through the traumatic NATO bombardment in early spring 1999. It was signed with the destruction of some of the most important works of modern architecture in the city as a result of their appropriation by the Milosevic regime – the Ministry of Defense building, the Avala TV tower in the old part of the city, as well as the CK tower and some others of New Belgrade and merely sealed the capital's status as a symbolic, functional, and physical ruin.³²

³¹ Ibid, p. 38.

³² Ibid, p. 25.



Fig. 4.8: NATO bombing in 1999- Central Committee building (<http://www.vesti-online.com>)

Until 2000 and democratic changes, the blocks seemed to have absorbed all experienced turmoil, from anarchy and a “flexible” economy to transnational migration - all volatility pacified, settled, contained within a robust city form.³³

³³ Ibid, p. 39.

Chapter 5: New Belgrade in new millennium

The election of Serbia's first democratic post-communist government in **October 5, 2000** marked a turning point in the city's recent history. As the country returned to relative economic and political stability, its capital city saw notable signs of urban regeneration. In spite of all tragic and destructive "developments" in Serbia in the nineties, Serbian society entered the New Millennium as a considerably changed society, with many features similar to other post-socialist societies. Also, it seems sound to claim that such real social transformations, which were going contrary to the regime intentions to prevent transition, have made the recent change of regime and the end of Milosevic's rule possible in Serbia.¹ The new political elite opened the doors to socio-economic reforms and relations with the West. Initiated transformation has helped recovering the position of creative classes and development of real estate markets, which has enlarged the contrasts within the Serbian society and instigated specific changes in urban neighborhoods.² In the competition for European cities and regions of the future in 2006 and 2007, organized by the Financial Times magazine, Belgrade was proclaimed "City of the Future in Southern Europe".³



Fig. 5.1: October 5, 2000- overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic (<http://www.politika.rs>)

¹ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, Review of Sociology Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27–49.

² Petrovic Mina (2007) *Diversification of urban neighbourhoods; the case study of New Belgrade*, European Network of Housing Research Conference, Rotterdam, p. 5.

³ http://www.siepa.gov.rs/site/en/home/1/investing_in_serbia/why_serbia/#Belgrade



Fig. 5.2: October 5, 2000- new democratic coalition (<http://http://www.pecat.co.rs>)

Current economic, political and administrative situation

In the previous chapter we spoke about privatization as one of the most important facts in city transformation processes. After the political changes in 2000, already, in the first half of the year 2001, when a new **Law on privatization** was in preparation some 400 “social firms” had a speedy “ownership transformation”. The new law was supposed to greatly abrogate the rights of employees on free shares provisioned by the former laws and to reduce the role of employees’ collectives in the privatization process, and this seems to explain the speeded “ownership transformation” at the beginning of the year 2001.⁴

The new government of Serbia enacted a new Law on privatization in the summer of 2001. Privatization became obligatory and should be completed during a period of four years after the Law had been enacted, but unfortunately it is still in progress. The state agency for privatization has been directly preparing some 150 firms to be sold by tenders and some 7000 firms on auctions. By the end of 2001 three of 150 firms planned for tenders were sold, and 22 auctions were successful. During the year 2002 some additional 10 firms were privatized by tenders and several hundreds of “social firms” were successfully privatized through auctions. The process of privatization is still

⁴ Bolcic Silvano (2003), *BLOCKED TRANSITION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION: SERBIA IN THE NINETIES*, Review of Sociology Vol. 9 (2003) 2, pp. 27–49.

slow, for many reasons. Thus one could say that the real process of the institutionally provided privatization of the former “social firms” in Serbia has not gone too far, in spite of the described steps during this period to provide new “ownership arrangements” and a new system of governance in Serbian enterprises. Still, some important social transformations were under way.⁵

Serbia welcomes foreign participation in privatization. Serbia is open to foreign direct investment and to attract them is increasingly a priority for the Government. It has enacted specific legislation outlining guarantees and safeguards for foreign investors. The current Law on Foreign Investments establishes the framework for investment in Serbia. In 2006, Serbia developed a range of incentives designed to attract FDI, including cash grants to investors that create specified numbers of new jobs, tax incentives in the form of credits, cuts in payroll contributions and reduced corporate tax rates. The Government expanded these programs in July 2008 and in May 2010.⁶

These and other legislative changes designed to bring Serbia into compliance with European Union requirements were largely adopted on a piecemeal basis. In 2009, the Government initiated a much-needed “regulatory guillotine” project that aimed to streamline laws and regulations that impede businesses by removing up to one third of Serbia's business regulations, many of which are unnecessary, outdated or contradictory.⁷

In the first half of 2010, the EU Council decided to unblock process of the **Stabilization of Association Agreement** with Serbia. Although this process could be long, it remains important that Serbian ruling political elite insists on EU integration targeting future membership candidate status, improving international community and investors' perception Serbia and attracting an additional portion of foreign direct investments.⁸

Serbia's rating at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an entity that is relevant for business risk insurance evaluation, increased and passed from category six to five, positioning Serbia as the only country whose rating improved during this period. Also, international agency Dun & Bradstreet increased Serbia's rating from high-risk to a moderate risk referring to overall general positive economic and political trends. The payment balance deficit increased to 7.9% of GDP, as a primary consequence of the lower level of net current transfers during the fiscal period of 2010.⁹

Nowadays, Belgrade is experiencing very intensive increase of primarily economical, and also cultural, social and political indicators. GDP in Serbia was \$819 in 2000, \$4220 in 2006¹⁰ and \$5716 in 2010.¹¹ The latest International Monetary Fund report predicts that the Serbian GDP will be increase by 5% in 2012 and 5.5% in 2013 due to the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ U.S Department of State; Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs; *2011 Investment Climate Statement-Serbia*.
<http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2011/157353.htm>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Danos, Intellectual Property Consultants & Values, *Annual Property Survey Serbian Market 2010*, p.2.
http://www.danos.rs/wp-content/themes/DanosCompany/pdf/market_report_2010_serbia.pdf

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Djokic Jasmina and Graovac Ana (2008), *Implosive sprawl - Belgrade case study*, 44th ISoCaRP Congress

¹¹ http://www.siepa.gov.rs/site/en/home/1/living_in_serbia/key_facts/

successfully completed sixth review of the IMF stand-by credit arrangement - during the first half of 2010 and the privatization of Telekom Srbija - during the first half of 2011.¹²

Current process of urban changes

Serbia is still grappling with the consequences of the nationalizations and confiscations of all forms of private property following World War II. Prior owners of nationalized land became “users” of the land and acquired “rights of use” that, until 2003, could not be freely sold or transferred. In 2003, a new Law on Urban Planning and Construction recognized sales and transfers of property rights of use. The right of use was limited, however, to 99 years. The October 2006 Constitution recognized private rights in “construction land” (a term of art referring generally to land in urban areas). A new September, 2009 **Law on Planning and Construction** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 72/2009) recognized the transformation of land use rights into rights of freehold private ownership of construction land.¹³

Companies that had gained land pursuant to privatization, bankruptcy or other means are able under the new law to transform usage rights into ownership rights by paying a fee representing the difference between the current market value of construction land and the costs of acquiring the land rights. However, the Law did not set forth defined procedures for property right conversions. In the absence of clear procedures, land registries tend to avoid positive resolution of conversion requests, and public attorneys’ offices commonly challenge land registry actions that do recognize conversion applications.¹⁴

Serbia has yet to enact a comprehensive general restitution law addressing how property nationalized under the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will be restituted or compensated. Although Serbia enacted legislation on restitution of religious properties, the constitutionality of the law has been challenged in Serbia’s courts. Efforts to enact a general restitution law have stalled pending resolution of this legal challenge. In the meantime, approximately 150,000 restitution claims have been filed by domestic and international claimants. The 2009 Law on Planning and Construction provides that proceeds from transactions in which land usage rights are converted to land ownership rights are to be shared equally between local government budgets and a National Restitution Fund. Establishing the Fund and the principles for its operation, however, are dependent on passage of a general restitution law.¹⁵ The 2009 law covers several other important issues. For example, it introduces various measures for legalization of

¹² Danos, Intellectual Property Consultants & Values, *Annual Property Survey Serbian Market 2010*, p.2.
http://www.danos.rs/wp-content/themes/DanosCompany/pdf/market_report_2010_serbia.pdf

¹³ U.S Department of State; Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs; *2011 Investment Climate Statement-Serbia*.
<http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2011/157353.htm>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

illegal constructions. Above all, it is designed to harmonize planning, construction and property ownership with EU norms.¹⁶

Specifically, in terms of planning in Belgrade in 2003 by Belgrade City Assembly had been adopted the last **Master Plan of Belgrade 2021** which was redeveloped in 2009. It was drawn up under the leadership of Professor Vladimir Macura and Miodrag Ferencak. It defines the nature of the spatial organization and construction in Belgrade, in line with the requirements and demands of a society in 'transition', which is characterized by the introduction of a market economy and the process of privatization. Drawing on internationally recognized principles of sustainable urban development, this plan affirms planning as a process that insists on transparency, flexibility, better coordination among participants, as well as the efficient solving of the main problems of development.¹⁷

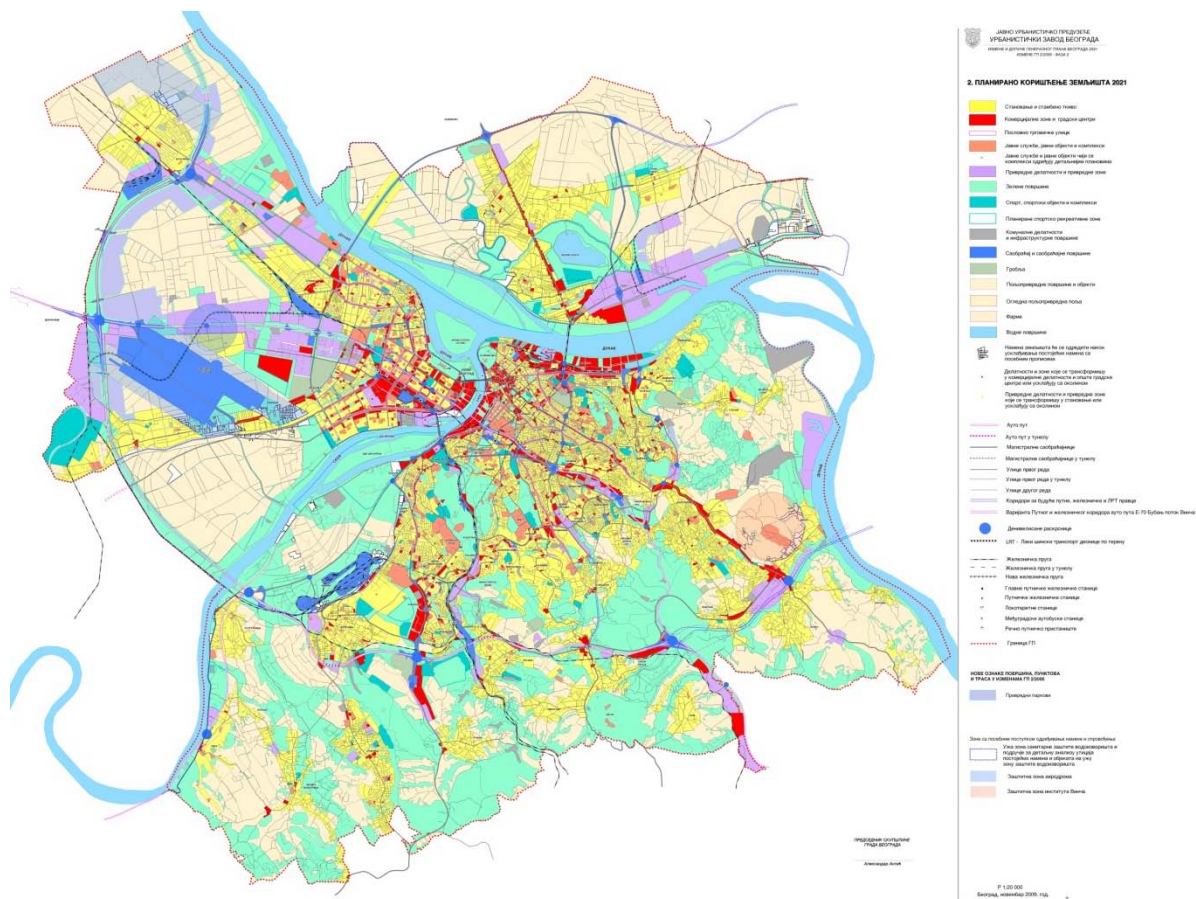


Fig. 5.3: Master Plan of Belgrade 2021 (<http://www.beoland.com>)

¹⁶ Waley Paul (2011), *From modernist to market urbanism: the transformation of New Belgrade*, Planning Perspectives, Vol.26, No. 2, April 2011, pp.209-235.

¹⁷ Grozdanic Milica (2008), *Belgrade - European metropolis, transformations through space and time*, 44th ISOCARP Congress, Dalian, China, p.4.

This is the only plan covering the entire space of New Belgrade. The critical analysis shows that the issues of New Belgrade development and transformation, as a unique and specific urban-architectural entity, have not been recognized as a current problem by the plan. At the same time, New Belgrade is considered as an important location which is bringing the future commercial functions in the fore and favoring them in relation to other central facilities.¹⁸

According to this plan the New Belgrade area is divided into urban entities belonging to different spatial zones and thus it is not treated as integral one. In order to secure ambience unity and continuity of planning character of New Belgrade, it is envisaged to make regulation plans which should not cover the areas smaller than a block. However, it is not required to consider this entity in the context of a wider surrounding, so it is calling in question the realization of desired results.¹⁹

The plan emphasizes the New Belgrade urban structure based on the type of open block as its basic specificity. According to this characteristic some urban parameters are determined. However, the plan does not treat these spaces as a part of specific urban concept, they are treated in the same way as other urban entities. The plan also recognizes their particularities in historical, functional, parametric and ambience sense. For example permitted plot usage is the same for the center of the old Belgrade, center of Zemun and center of New Belgrade (3.5), while permitted maximum plot ratio in New Belgrade is somewhat smaller relative to the other two mentioned central zones (60%).²⁰

Also, despite a declarative attitude that the ambience of New Belgrade as a modern city should be preserved, it is clear that New Belgrade open spaces are recommended for intensive development following the logic that more free spaces enable greater scope of new development.²¹

New destiny: New urban landmarks

In recent years, New Belgrade started to develop as the capital's new commercial hub. Most of big supermarkets, shopping malls and smart office buildings have been constructed there, thus New Belgrade has been attracting the greatest share of foreign investments at Belgrade real estate market. It is expected to develop as new "city" of Belgrade and consequently pull new service class.²² New Belgrade is becoming new re-finding, re-reading and remapping field, reforming itself into a genuinely new city, grabbing attention for himself and making a new identity of a new business and cultural center, without compromises.

¹⁸ Maric, I., Nikovic, A., and Manic, B. (2010). *Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation*. *Spatium*, (22), pp. 47-56.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Petrovic Mina (2007) *Diversification of urban neighbourhoods; the case study of New Belgrade*, European Network of Housing Research Conference, Rotterdam, p. 6.

However, it was only after 2000 and Milosevic's departure that enough political and economic situation was gathered. New Belgrade was presented as a prime destination for domestic and foreign investment. According to that New Belgrade's central zone is once again developing a new identity. Both politicians and residents have referred to it as "the City", "the Downtown", the "Serbian Wall Street" and "Manhattan of Belgrade". The area of New Belgrade has become the largest building site in the city, with around thirty new projects and at least a million square meters in various stages of construction.²³ It is marked by fashionable shopping malls, concentration of banks, other office spaces, TV stations, but also by new housing construction of high quality standards. Supported by new set of legislative, new establishment and new system of urban planning philosophy, New Belgrade is becoming a new city, most developed part of Belgrade, supported by everything- politics, economy, statistic and legislative.

New Belgrade's central zone was identified both by the city government and the Master Plan for Belgrade 2021 as the first strategic location in the capital's expansion into a commercial center through private investment, owing to its high quality infrastructure and large residential community.²⁴ However, from the urban planning perspective, the development of New Belgrade and other parts of the city has been carried out outside of plans; having lost political support and status as an important social function, the urban planning profession has been nearly reduced to a technical-formal validation of decisions carried out at a higher level.²⁵

The strongest efforts for changing the character of New Belgrade's central zone belong to the period of post-socialist transition. During the 1990s the main actors involved in projects of the transformation were mostly extent successors of the former socialist elites. They were benefiting from political nepotism and generous public funding with having no obligations to New Belgrade's urban premises. "Even at sites such as the central axis, where the question of forming an urban center takes clear precedence over any other, the agenda for new architecture and urban representation has been narrated under an ideological veil of market democracy, identified with economic viability in general and a principle of *laissez-faire's* primacy over other regulatory instruments."²⁶

One of the early examples of this process is **Belgrade Arena**, a multivalent indoor event hall for around 20,000 spectators. Its construction had begun soon after an architectural competition in 1991 and was realized slowly and finished in 2007. This generic, introverted volume, further separated from the rest of the plan by a massive access-exit infrastructure, was not placed in an appropriate peripheral location, but rather in the city's very center, in order to boost construction in its surroundings. The building now holds popular appeal because of media events, such as the Eurovision song contest in 2008 or Universiade in 2009.²⁷

²³ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished publication, p. 6.

²⁴ Bobic Djordje (2007), *Illegal Construction to be torn down*, interview, Economist (Belgrade), special edition, p. 10.

²⁵ Vujovic, Petrovic (2007), *Belgrade's post-socialist urban evolution : reflections by the actors in the development process*, p. 374.

²⁶ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished publication, pp. 22-23.

²⁷ Ibid.



Fig. 5.4: Belgrade Arena ([http:// www.panoramio.com](http://www.panoramio.com))



Fig. 5.5: Belgrade Arena- Eurovision song contest in 2008 ([http:// www.ziogiorgio.com](http://www.ziogiorgio.com))

Another example is part of a series of iconic mega-developments proposed in recent years for the last large plot in New Belgrade's central zone, '**Block 26**' directly facing the Federation Palace now the single most expensive building parcel in the city. Here leading local developers, organs of city government, and global investors have coalesced in order to achieve the highest possible investment returns; the realization of these aims would evidently call for amendments to existing plans.²⁸ The story of this development is a complicated one. The current rights owners are two large conglomerates that had formerly been 'socially owned', Napred and Energoprojekt. They have gone ahead with the construction of office buildings in part of the block, and have controversially sanctioned the construction of a church that now sits there looking totally out of context.



Fig. 5.6: Block 26- the existing church out of context ([http:// www.pbase.com](http://www.pbase.com))

The principal development project involves the construction, financed by Israeli investors, of four large skyscrapers. At the time of this writing, the project is on hold. However, it is clear that a new central business district will materialize as a result of a project whose main thrust is upwards and which consists of the provision of high-quality office space with a smaller residential component. The process behind this pivotal development exemplifies the neo-liberal urbanism that has characterized urban change in CEE (Central European Estates) over the last decade and longer. There has been a

²⁸ Ibid.

lack of public discussion of development possibilities, and more precisely a lack of consultation among planning experts. At the same time, there has been an automatic presumption among the relevant parties – government, architectural elite and investors – that a new business centre is required and that this is best translated through the construction of high-rise buildings.²⁹



Fig. 5.7: Block 26- the development project financed by Israeli investors ([http:// www.beobuild.rs](http://www.beobuild.rs))

Many of the recent projects are perimeter blocks with various new-old elements, inserted to simply fill up open space between the modern buildings. It is obvious architectural unwilling to enter into a dialogue with the plan and express itself only as a quick declaration of the private sphere and of market priorities.³⁰

The cases of conversion of some of the modern capital's best represent reconstructions of the old buildings from the 1960s such as “**Usce**” **Tower** (in socialistic period the Central Comity Tower).³¹ Genesis of the process of uncontrolled construction may be observed through the analysis of construction in Block 16. After the change in

²⁹ Waley Paul (2011), *From modernist to market urbanism: the transformation of New Belgrade*, Planning Perspectives, Vol.26, No. 2, April 2011, pp.209-235.

³⁰ Topalovic Milica (2009), *NEW BELGRADE- The Modern City's Unstable Paradigms*, unpublished publication, p. 6.

³¹ Ibid.

ownership of the “Usce” office building and on the initiative of the investor, who wanted to build new buildings on the empty part of the plot, a general and invitation poll competition was announced in 2003 for preliminary urban-architectural design of the **“Usce” Multifunctional Center**. The competition was announced by the Belgrade Land Development Public Agency and company “European Construction” in cooperation with the Association of Belgrade Architects and the Town Planners Association of Belgrade. On the competition both local and foreign architects participated. The obligation of announcing competition for preliminary design has derived from the Master Plan of Belgrade 2021, as well as from the need for defining additional urban indicators for elaboration of a regulation plan.³² It was planned to preserve the character of the block, with the possibility of extending the appendage part, which was also planned earlier.³³



Fig. 5.8: “Usce” Tower and “Usce” Multifunctional Center ([http:// www. plusmood.com](http://www.plusmood.com))

The winner offered the concept of the old building, destroyed in bombing of NATO in 1999, renovation in form of strengthened vertical accent and a new supplemented one which matched with the existing one and got a contemporary expression. Based on the winner project a Detailed Regulation Plan was made in 2004. However, during the construction, the deviations from the adopted plan concepts occurred and the investor

³² Maric, I., Nikovic, A., and Manic, B. (2010). *Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation*. Spatium, (22), pp. 47-56.

³³ See Master Plan of Belgrade 2021(2003), 5.3.6. “Urban planning recommendations for particular entities in the regime of partial protection”, pp. 173.

commenced the construction of the building on a considerably bigger area than permitted. The City Assembly adopted a new Detailed Regulation Plan in 2007 in order to accommodate the “necessary increase of capacity of the Multifunctional Center”. Figure 5.9 shows the relationship between the undeveloped and developed areas of the block according to the competition concept and one done according to the Detailed Regulation Plan. The new supplemented building called Usce Shopping Center was opened in 2008. Compared to the competition concept the realized design is turned towards inner space and does not communicate with its surroundings. In addition, the new building has greater surface area and volume then envisaged by the competition design and it obstructs the view of the Usce Tower.³⁴

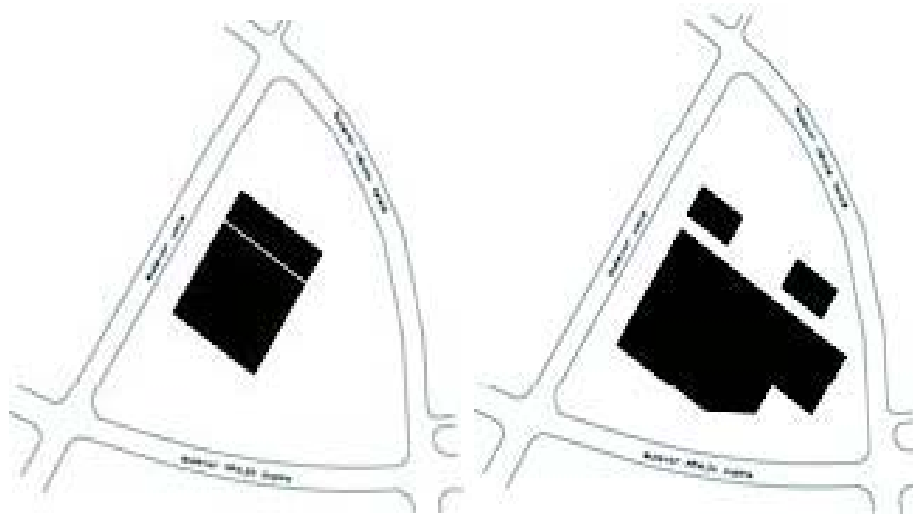


Fig. 5.9. Relationship between the undeveloped and developed areas of block 16 according to the Detailed Regulation Plan of 2007
(Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation)

New Belgrade is nowadays also developing with modern housing construction projects. Currently finished residential project is **Univerzitetsko Selo- Belville** built for the Universiade in Belgrade in 2009. The investors were Delta Real Estate and Hypo Alpe Adria Bank which formed the private company “Block 67 Associates” to construct and sell properties in the Belville complex. The purchaser was City of Belgrade. The requirement was to deliver an athlete’s village capable of hosting 10,000 athletes in time for the 2009 Universiade Student Games. With a site chosen in the Block 67 of New Belgrade Associates with its construction partner Mace completed the project of fourteen residential and two commercial buildings in time for the Games. After the Games were over, the flats needed to be ready for private residential sale as a development called Belville. Made up of six plots and spread over 14 hectares, the complex also included 35,000 square meters of commercial and retail space. The project was completed in time for the July 2009 Games, and now the flats are in private ownership.³⁵ The Bellvile complex is the most modern living block in Serbia.

³⁴ Maric, I., Nikovic, A., and Manic, B. (2010). *Transformation of the New Belgrade urban tissue: Filling the space instead of interpolation*. *Spatium*, (22), pp. 47-56.

³⁵ Mace Group official web page: <http://www.macegroup.com/projects/belville-blok-67-belgrade>



Fig. 5.10: Belville complex (<http://www.belville.rs>)



Fig. 5.11: Belville complex upon realization (<http://www.wikipedia.org>)

Presently under construction is a new **bridge on Ada** which will connect New Belgrade with the old part of the city on the south of Sava River. The first idea about the bridge on this location came from Djordje Kovaljevski's plan for New Belgrade from 1923 but there was not enough power for the realization till now. However, the continuing expansion of the city northwards has been significantly constrained by the limited capacity of the existing bridges crossing the river Sava, creating a particular bottle neck increasing the level of traffic congestion in the centre of Belgrade. In order to reduce traffic congestion in the City of Belgrade and increase capacity on the network a third major road bridge across the Sava River being part of the Inner City Semi-Ring Road is under construction, situated 4 kilometers upstream from its confluence with the river Danube. The Preliminary Design was completed by Ponting Maribor, DDC Ljubljana & CPV Novi Sad in 2006, following being awarded the first place in an international competition held in 2004. When completed, the new Sava Bridge will be the largest single pylon cable-stayed bridge in Europe. The load of the 376m long Main Span is transferred through 40 twin cables to the pylon and continue to the 200m long Back Span. The longer Main Span is constructed of structural steel in order to keep the weight of the structure down to a minimum possible. This is in turn balanced by the shorter but heavier Back Span constructed in concrete. On the south side one end span extends the bridge to the connection to the approach ramps. On the north side the Side Span consists of 4 spans of 70, 108, 80, 80m. Construction is similar to that of the Back Span, being post-tensioned, reinforced concrete. Fixing point for the deck is the pier table at the pylon. The structure, including the approaches will be the biggest viaduct of the Balkan region.³⁶



Fig. 5.12: Bridge on Ada- preliminary design (<http://www.savabridge.com>)

³⁶ Official web page of the Bridge over the River Sava: http://www.savabridge.com/the_bridge.htm#doi



Fig. 5.13: Bridge on Ada- look to New Belgrade (personal photo)

A documentary about the making of the new Belgrade bridge at Ada Ciganlija was recently shown on the U.S. TV channel Discovery, as part of a new season of the popular series "Build it Bigger".³⁷ "What makes this bridge at Ada specific is the fact that all parts are made manually at the spot", Danny Forster, the host of this show, said in that episode and added that "the bridge is the biggest bridge building project in Europe and the first mega project in Belgrade after the 1990's".³⁸

The city officials have specified on several occasions that the bridge costs EUR 2,719 per square meter, that is, EUR 3,209 with VAT included. At the beginning of the construction, they claimed that the bridge alone cost EUR 120 million, without access roads, but certain experts say that the project is already now worth over EUR 400 million.³⁹ However, this bridge will be an important element of the future Belgrade traffic network and will cause the new constructions and development of the area. At the moment the area around the bridge is industrial zone, but there are many projects and ideas that will change direction of growth in this area.

³⁷ <http://vimeo.com/25935089>

³⁸ Tunnel instead of bridge near Ada - New bridges in Belgrade: plans, ideas and implementation, "Eekapija" article, July 2011
http://www.ekapija.com/website/sr/page/450967_en

³⁹ Ibid.

As it was the situation in architectural practice of pre-war Yugoslavia- that existed the division of architecture on realistic, the one that is built, and one bold which is shown in competitions, this situation is present nowadays in Serbian architecture as well. After almost 30 years, this September saw announcement for an international competition for conceptual design of the **Centre for Promotion of Science** in New Belgrade's block 39. Professional community has shown great interest in this competition in which they received 232 entries from 47 countries worldwide. The winner of international competition for the architectural design of the Centre for the Promotion of Science in Belgrade Block 39 is Austrian architect Wolfgang Tschapeller, which by international election commission offered the best solution to meet the needs of its function and location in which the object is being located. Austrian architect offered a unique solution in which object will have two main levels to include exhibition space, conference rooms, science labs and planetarium. As highlighted when the competition was announced, construction of the center will cost 20 million Euros for which the funds will be secured by loans with the European Investment Bank as part of the investment program for scientific infrastructure. It was announced that the project documentation will be completed by spring 2011, when the start of construction of the center is planned. The completion of the building is optimistically scheduled for 2012 year. The completion of the international competition made the first significant step to build a modern facility that will bring together content from the sciences, arts, and will become a sort of seat of scientific and educational institutions.⁴⁰



Fig. 5.14: Centre for Promotion of Science- the first prize winner (<http://www.dezeen.com>)

⁴⁰ <http://www.beobuild.rs/read.php/455.html>

The political climate through the first decade of this century was not uniformly favorable for foreign investments, as the prevailing mood lurched between a defensive nationalism and a more outward-looking liberalism. Nevertheless, the wide open spaces that remained in New Belgrade at the turn of the century were tempting targets. The unfinished nature of the terrain appeared to be inviting investments. There were plenty of positive factors for the boosters to draw upon. These included Belgrade's central position in Southeast Europe and its location at the crossroads of two European transport corridors (7 and 10). While the ambiguities that have clouded the regulatory environment have put off many investors, others appear to have been attracted by the possibility of making considerably greater profits than would be possible in a more tightly regulated and transparent market. A steady rise in property prices in the middle part of the first decade of this century saw the price of residential property in New Belgrade reach 2000 Euros per square meter. The 'purchase' price of a lease on newly built property lagged behind, so that even when the per-square-meter cost of construction was thrown in, a clear profit was accrued for developers. It is interesting to note that many investments in the property market in New Belgrade over the last decade have come, as well as from domestic and foreign-based Serbian interests, from the wider Southeast European region, understood here as stretching from Austria to Greece, with the important addition of Israel. Slovenian investors were the first in, as they were familiar with the system of state ownership of urban land, and they reaped the initial benefits. The first new retail centre in New Belgrade, the prominently located new Merkator, was a Slovenian investment. Greek interests are active in a number of sites in New Belgrade, most notably in the central Block 26. Israeli companies have been particularly prominent in Belgrade, as they have in other major cities of CEE, more willing, it would appear, to adapt to local regulatory and market conditions. Two Israeli investments in New Belgrade stand out for their size and prominence. The first is called Airport City, and consists of two rows of large glass office blocks containing nearly 200,000 square meters, constructed at a cost of 200 million Euros. The second is the same Block 26 in which Greek investors are active. But while Greek and Israeli investors have taken to the opportunities that they have seen in New Belgrade and beyond, Turkish investors and construction companies, responsible for a significant number of construction projects in Moscow, while reportedly keen to work in Serbia, have been put off by the regulatory environment and high prices.⁴¹

New Belgrade changes the growth direction from the so called "dormitory" in socialism to the main business, cultural and education district in Serbia nowadays. Many companies choose New Belgrade for their headquarters such as Acer, Comtrade group, Intel Computers, Microsoft, Delta Holding, DHL, Jat, OMV, Siemens, Société Générale, Telekom Serbia, Telenor Serbia, Unilever, Vip mobile, Yugoimport SDPR, Ericsson, Colliers, CB Richard Ellis, Cisco, SAP AG, Hewlett-Packard, Huawei... The Belgrade Stock Exchange is also located in New Belgrade. Other notable structures built not too long afterwards include convention and congress hall Sava Center, Hotel Jugoslavija, Genex condominium, Genex Tower sports and concert venues Hala Sportova and Belgrade Arena, and 4 and 5-star hotels Continental Hotel Belgrade, Holiday Inn, Tulip

⁴¹ Waley Paul (2011), *From modernist to market urbanism: the transformation of New Belgrade*, Planning Perspectives, Vol.26, No. 2, April 2011, pp.209-235.

Inn... It also became new university center. There are numerous private universities as well as Faculty of Dramatic Arts which belongs to the University of Belgrade based near university residential campus - Studentski Grad.

Nowadays, according to the new political system the whole power of decisions is in hands of private investors. In an impoverished society, as Serbia is, the influence of these who own financial resources through the politicians is crucial in planning and construction. We can only hope that the situation will change through the foreign investments or EU support for the crucial projects and that it will bring a new look to our cities and that in the beginning of the new Millennium architecture will not be divided on the one that is built and the one shown on competitions.

Chapter 6:

Conclusions- perspective for the future development

From period when the first blocks were constructed, until the change of direction at the beginning of the new millennium, New Belgrade looked monumental in an awkward way and many complained that it was a symbol of grayness and drabness. They often use a term dormitory to describe their view of New Belgrade as a place that doesn't inspire creative living nor encourage healthy human interaction, and is only good for overnight sleep at the end of the hard day's work.



Fig. 2.1: New Belgrade housing blocks (<http://www.urbancannibals.org>)

This opinion has found its way into Serbian pop culture as well. In early 1980s track called “I don’t want to leave in Block 65” (Necu da zivim u bloku 65), popular Serbian band Riblja čorba sings about a depressed individual who hates the world because he’s surrounded by the concrete of New Belgrade, while a more recent local cinematic trend sees New Belgrade presented somewhat clumsily as the Serbian version of New York ghettos like those found in Harlem, Brooklyn and the Bronx. The most obvious example of the latter would be 2002 movie “1 to 1” (1 na 1), which portrays a bunch of Serbian teenagers who rap, shoot guns, play street basketball and seem to blame many of their woes on living in New Belgrade. Other films like “Apsolute 100” (Apsolutnih 100) and

“The Wounds” also implicitly paint New Belgrade in the negative light but they have a more coherent point of view and place their stories within the context of the 1990s when war and international isolation truly did push some Serbs, including those inhabiting New Belgrade, to desperate acts.

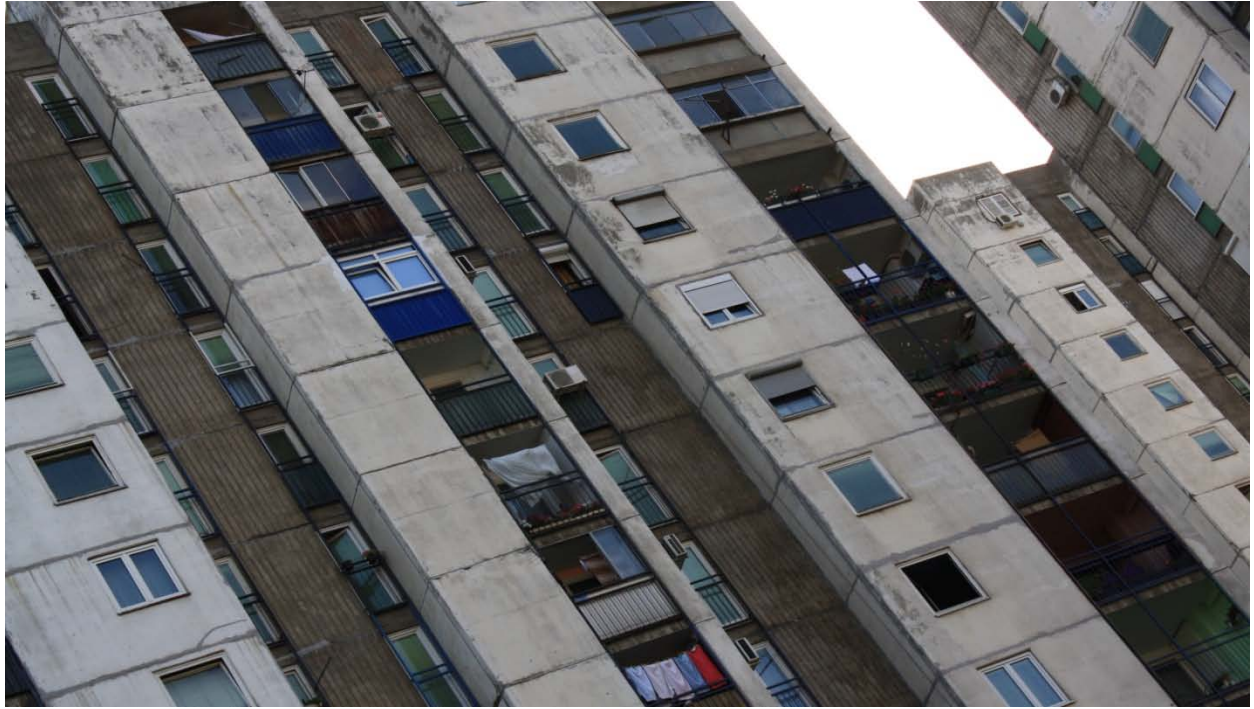


Fig. 2.2: Usce Tower: Grayness of New Belgrade housing blocks (<http://www.urbancannibals.org>)



Fig. 2.3: Grayness of New Belgrade housing blocks (<http://www.urbancannibals.org>)

What is seen on site of New Belgrade today is persistent, street by street, block by block advancement of new development. Stefan Romer, an artist and theorist from Munich, for the study *Differentiated neighborhoods of New Belgrade* produced the documentary film or road-movie *Boulevard of Illusions: Learning from New Belgrade* (2007) which, as its title suggests, focuses on one of the main boulevards in New Belgrade whose name was changed from Boulevard of Lenin to Boulevard of Mihajlo Pupin, after the famous Serbian scientist. While driving along the Boulevard, in the direction of New Belgrade, one can see the remains of the socialist plan of an administrative axe of the new capital city with just two realized buildings, Central Committee of the Communist Party, now Usce Business Centre, and the Palace of Federation, the function of which is yet to be determined. On the way back to the city, on the other side of the Boulevard, the situation has changed and one after another, new corporate buildings and banks are rising. What was once a common traffic flow of workers/citizens going from their apartments in New Belgrade to work in the old city is shown to have recently changed direction, as the New Belgrade is turning into the business district or "City".

Also, couple of times mentioned in this text, the Usce Tower is a real symbol of transformation of this part of the city. It had leaved and been changed as the history of New Belgrade. It was built in 1964 to serve as headquarters of the Central Committee of the League of Communists in the former Yugoslavia. The building was exclusively used for the Communist Party. During the "golden years" of Yugoslavia the lights were left turned on in the building so at night it would spell out "TITO". The building was a symbol of a strong socialist country. At the time was of the latest architectural modernity. The foundations and the skeleton of the building were so strong that they would later survive multiple bomb blasts. After the death of Josip Broz Tito and the election of Slobodan Milosevic as the president of Serbia in 1990 the Socialist Party of Serbia moved into the building unlawfully, occupying ten floors. The party leased out many of the floors to domestic companies. They kept however 9 levels as offices for their party. The cabinet of Josip Broz Tito, which he rarely used, was cleared out. On April 21, 1999 NATO air strikes hit the building, setting the upper floors on fire. Several days later NATO repeated the attack. In total 12 Tomahawk missiles were fired at this building. Amazingly the structure was so tough that it withstood these attacks. Reconstruction work on the building started in early 2003 and was carried out by European Construction. The reconstruction was completed in 2005. Two additional floors were added—conference halls are located on 24th and a restaurant on the 25th. The multi-million dollar project has 25 stories (above ground), totaling around 25,000 square meters of office space. An observation deck, fitness area and cafe are located on the last level of the building. The facade got a new look and it is all in glass now. The reconstruction is referred to by many as the re-birth of Serbia (as democratic parties were finally in power in Serbia). In April 2009, a shopping mall named Usce Shopping Center was opened at the south side of the tower. The plan to build a second tower has stalled because of the economic crisis and as we explained in previous chapter the Detailed Regulation Plan for this area was adopted according to the willing of investors, taking more that it was appropriate from the belonging land parcel.

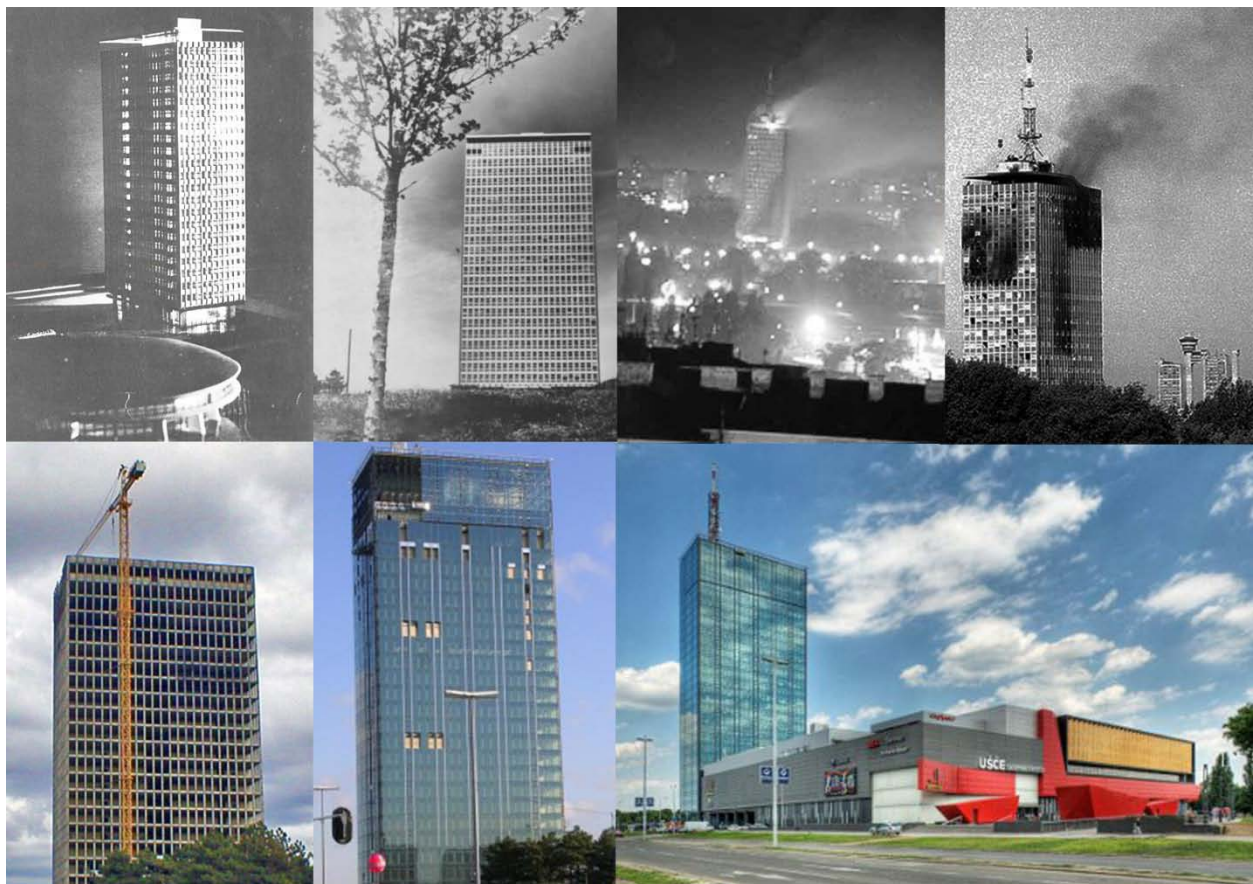


Fig. 2.4: Usce Tower: from concept, trough materialization and destruction to reconstruction (various sources)

On first sight it looks New Belgrade changed direction of growth from the symbol of socialism and dormitory to the new symbol of democracy- cultural and business center and popular area for the family life. Today, New Belgrade's central zone is the biggest potential of the capital. With new shopping malls, cinemas, business buildings, the biggest sport hall on Balkan it is making a new identity. Proximity to the airport, wide boulevards, close to work and various cultural events are one of the great advantages of the new New Belgrade

However, the material image of New Belgrade presents the ruined complexes of the socialist modern period in one layer and the figures of global capitalism in another. The open non-private space of community, that notoriously not-cared for common space of the housing blocks is rapidly being consumed by the commercial drive of the private capital expanding its boundaries into the green areas in public/social property. The common ground of the secular city is being partitioned off for consecration of sites where urbanization means de-secularization. The public space of a large manifestation square is divided into building plots. On the other side, what was deemed the failure of the mega housing blocks, segregation of the housing function, lack of central urban functions, alienation, lack of identity etc., is not being addressed at all. Instead, the events as from the beginning of 1990s brought in spatial disorder and unplanned

physical development, grossly reproducing an emerging societal anomy and other turmoil of the primitive post-socialist/communist capitalism. The blocks are left to decay while being cordoned off by the entropic development of notorious grey economy shanty town. The new Master Plan of Belgrade 2021, failed to give a new integrative approach in strategic urban planning. Aiming generally at reform of financial and propriety system, including the establishment of the real property market, the Plan remains market orientated and, thus, single-minded and rigid, providing no sound conception on the public interests. It specifically lacks strategic consideration of sensitive issues of the reconstruction of New Belgrade, notwithstanding its references to the values of particular modernist buildings, sites, and open block character of its urban structure. Furthermore, stipulating architectural competitions for the most important locations prior to providing thorough analysis of socio-economic and environmental factors, and with no overall vision for preservation of the distinct ethos of New Belgrade, the Plan perpetuates the problems of mere physical planning and vicissitudes of architectural production.

The image of New Belgrade speaks, politically, of the idea of the city, about who we are and what we want in urban space; what shape our political and social interaction is meant to take; the ways this interaction is present and represented in the city; whether it provides an appropriate stage for our dialogue. The central issue here thus does not concern the paradigms of power that ought to be monumentalized in the city, nation state, or global economy, but rather the ways in which the different, non-exclusive forms of the city's political, social, cultural, and economic life can be taken in, represented, and reinforced within a tangible urban frame.



Fig. 2.5: Old- new conflict (personal photo)

In an environment like Serbia the political and urban spheres are separate. Politics as a decision-making tool aimed at the public interest and common good and urban planning has lost its role in shaping the future. Remarkably, nearly fifty years have passed since the last overarching urban plans and concepts for New Belgrade were created. Between that time and the present, the area has developed erratically, shifting from one unstable paradigm to the next.

It has been shown herein that, in the case of New Belgrade, the main problem of its current and probably future development is a process of filling undeveloped parts of blocks under the pressure of new commercial facilities which basically change the character of planned urban matrix of New Belgrade mega-blocks.

Problems that we are facing today in analyzing urban tissue development and transformations derive from insufficiently developed vision of the future development of the city in the context of contemporary consumer society. Economic factors, which lie in the basis of society, are not in balance with other elements and factors in the city design and planning system, this resulting in space which satisfies only primary capitalist appetites for safe investments and quick capital turnover, while long-term goals in space development have not been considered. Space, which is still the greatest social and state resource of Serbia and a challenge to big capital, by proper strategy for planning and creating an adequate spatial and physical framework of life in the city, is becoming a capital itself.

Twenty first century is the time of globalization. Belgrade opened for foreign investments by changing to the democratic government and adapting new laws and regulations. There are some issues we have to solve in process of association to EU, but Belgrade is becoming competitive on the world market. Apropos that Belgrade should rely again on city planning and urban design: unquestionably the best way to regulate the city space. New method of urban planning should have to simplify the content of the plan and the procedure, also it should be more explicit, transparent, flexible, to establish continuity, better coordination among all the participants and to be selective and efficient in solving the main problems of development. The rational use of land as the rare and limited recourse is one of the aims of planning. To save urban form of New Belgrade we must escape from inevitable limitations of short-term solutions dependent on political interest; we must eliminate lobbying and corruption in decision making process and consider urban planning problem as a whole.

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